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MEMOIRS OF QUEEN HORTENSE

MOTHER OF NAPOLEON III.

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QUEEN HORTENSE.

MEMOIRS

OF

QUEEN HORTENSE,

MOTHER OF NAPOLEON III.

COMPILED BY

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AND

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QUEEN HORTENSE.

CHAPTER I.

DAYS OF CHILDHOOD.

It has been written by a great German poet that "death is not too high a price to pay for a moment of happiness," but that a long life of torture and sorrow is too heavy a requital for a brief span of felicity. In the case of Hortense, the daughter of an Empress and mother of an Emperor, it is hard to say when she knew that moment of happiness which was to reward her for life-enduring suffering. She wept much and endured much: from her earliest youth she learned to know tears and misfortune, nor were they afterwards spared to the maiden, the wife, and the mother.

Hortense is the member of the Napoleon family who most attracts sympathy. This delicate and yet haughty woman, when she descended from the throne, when she had ceased to be a queen, when she at length

sought shelter in the tomb, weary of life and exhausted, still remained among us as the queen of flowers. Flowers have preserved the memory of Josephine's child, and they did not turn from her, as so many of her friends did, when she was no longer the daughter of the omnipotent Emperor, but of the exile. She still lived among the flowers, and Gavarny, their great poet, has erected a most touching monument to her in his *fleurs animées*. On a hill of Hortensias reposes the picture of Queen Hortense, and in the distance, like a departing mirage, the domes and towers of Paris may be seen. Solitude prevails around, but in the air soars the Imperial Eagle. The Imperial mantle, with the golden bees, is spread out behind it like a comet's tail, the dark red ribbon and cross of the Legion of Honour are round its neck, and in its beak it bears a richly-covered spray of Crown Imperial.

The Queen of Holland knew all the grandeur and magnificence of the earth, and saw it all fade away. We should not say all, for her songs and poetry have survived, genius needing no crown to be immortal. When Hortense ceased to be a queen by grace of Napoleon, she still remained the poetess, *Dei gratiâ*. Her poems are pleasing and graceful; full of tenderness, and of deep, passionate fire, which, however, never exceeds the limits of feminine delicacy; while her musical compositions are agreeable and melodious. Who does not know the song *Va t'en, guerrier*, which Hortense wrote and composed, and afterwards transformed, by Napoleon's desire, into a military march, to the sound of which the soldiers of France formerly

left their country to bear the Gallic eagles to Russia, and to whose inspiring notes the same soldiers so recently invaded a second time the empire of the Czar.

Hortense's song has survived. At first the whole world sang it loudly and joyfully, and when the Bourbons had returned, the wounded, crippled warriors at the Invalides hummed it softly, while conversing among themselves in whispers, about "la gloire de la belle France." Now it echoes proudly again through France; rising jubilantly to the Vendôme statue of the Emperor, the bronze countenance of which seems to soften into a smile as the familiar strains are wafted up. The song has now a sacred significance for France, for it is the anthem of a religion before which she would wish all nations to fall down and worship, "the religion of reminiscences." The *Va t'en, guerrier,* that France now sings, echoes over the tomb of the queen, like salvos over the grave of a brave warrior.

The unhappy and amiable Hortense fought a terrible contest, but she constantly had, and ever retained, the courage peculiar to women, that of smiling through her tears. Her father died on the scaffold; her mother, the doubly dethroned Empress, of a broken heart; her step-father, on a solitary rock. Exiled and avoided, all these uncrowned kings and queens wandered hither and thither, banished from their home, and scarce obtaining from the favour of those to whom they had once shown mercy a nook of land where they could live in retirement, far from the turmoil of the world, brooding over their great recol-

lections and their great sorrows. Their past lay far behind them, like a dazzling fairy tale, which no one longer believed, and the present seemed welcome to nations, that they might irritate and torture the dethroned Napoleon family.

And yet, in spite of all this sorrow and humiliation, Queen Hortense had the courage not to hate humanity, and she taught her children to love their fellow-men and intreat them kindly. The heart of the dethroned queen bled from a thousand wounds; but she did not allow them to cicatrize, or her heart to harden beneath the broad scars of sorrow. She almost loved her sufferings, and kept her wounds open with her tears. Her own painful experience caused her to spare the sufferings of others, and to try to appease their grief. Hence her life was one incessant act of kindness, and when she died she was enabled to say of herself, as did her mother, the Empress Josephine, "I have wept greatly, but I never caused others to weep."

Hortense was the daughter of the Viscount de Beauharnois, who, contrary to the wish of his friends, married a young Creole lady, Mademoiselle Tascher de la Pagerie. The union, although one of love, did not prove a happy one, for both were young and inexperienced, passionate and jealous, and wanted the strength of character and energy necessary to turn the turbulent waves of their disposition into the channel of quiet matrimony.

The Viscount was too young to become to Josephine more than a loving and affectionate husband; he could not be her mentor and friend, to guide her in the difficult path of life; and she was too inexperienced, too innocent, and too lively to avoid those acts which her enemies, misconstruing into calumnies, could use as weapons against her.

Thus it came to pass that the domestic happiness of the young couple was soon troubled by violent storms. Josephine was too amiable and beautiful not to excite admiration and attention, and not yet sufficiently experienced to conceal her satisfaction at finding herself thus admired, nor even prudent enough to avoid exciting such admiration. In the singleness and innocence of her heart she thought her husband could not possibly feel any disquietude or suspicion on account of her playful coquetry, and she expected that he would repose implicit confidence in her fidelity. Her pride revolted against his suspicions, as did his jealousy against her seeming levity, and although at heart truly attached to each other, they would probably have dissolved their union, had not their children been a tie that kept them together.

These children were a boy, Eugène, and a daughter, Hortense, who was four years younger than her brother. Both parents loved them passionately, and whenever a quarrel took place in the presence of the children, an innocent word from Eugène or a caress from Hortense would effect a reconcili-

ation between two persons whose anger was nothing more than irritated love.

But these matrimonial storms became more violent in the course of time, and unfortunately Hortense was left alone to effect a reconciliation between her unhappy parents. Eugène, at the age of seven, had been sent to school, and little Hortense, no longer assisted by her brother, found herself unequal to the task of allaying the storm that raged between her parents. Intimidated by the violence of these domestic quarrels, she fled to some remote corner of the house, there to weep over a misfortune the greatness of which her little childish heart was as yet unable to comprehend.

At this sad and tempestuous period of her life, Josephine received a letter from Martinique, in which Madame Tascher de la Pagerie described her loneliness in a house whose extensive premises she shared with none but slaves and servants, in whose demeanour an alarming change she said had recently become visible. She therefore requested her daughter's return home, to brighten by her presence the last years of her life.

Josephine regarded this letter as an intimation from Heaven. Wearied of domestic discord, and determined to escape from it for ever, she left France with her little daughter, to seek on the other side of the ocean, and in the arms of her mother, the happiness of a peaceful life.

But at that time peace seemed to have fled from

the world. All around storms were gathering, and an awful presentiment of impending danger, of horrors to come, seemed to be universally felt, like the sullen thunder that shakes the bowels of the earth when the crater is about to open with volcanic eruptions, and bury beneath floods of burning lava the peace and tranquillity of the human race. And the crater *did* belch forth its flames, scattering death and destruction widely around, and sweeping entire nations from the face of the earth. It was the Revolution.

The first and most fearful explosion of that awful crater took place in France, but its effects were not restricted to that country. The whole earth trembled, as if threatened with destruction by the wild volcanic matter that was at work beneath its surface. Martinique also felt the moral earthquake which in France had already produced that most hideous instrument of revolution, the guillotine, which had become as it were the altar of so-called national liberty, on which the mad, fanatic fury of the people sacrificed to their new idols those who had hitherto been their masters and lords, by whose death they thought to purchase their eternal freedom.

Egalité, fraternité, liberté, such was the battle cry of the intoxicated, blood-thirsty people. These words were written, as it were in a spirit of cruel jest, in letters of blood, on the instrument of death, to be witnessed, as the blood-stained knife fell on their necks, by those unfortunate aristocrats who, in spite of the principles thus laconically expressed, were not

suffered to enjoy the freedom of thought and life which was allowed to be the privilege of all.

The revolutionary fury of France having found its way to Martinique, had roused the slaves of that colony out of their sullen obedience, and armed them against their masters. They had resolved to have their share of that liberty, equality, and fraternity which had just been proclaimed; but the incendiary torch that was hurled into the house of the white planters was an awful light to welcome their new-born freedom.

Madame de la Pagerie's house was burnt, like that of many others.

One night Josephine was awakened by the lurid light of flames, which had already penetrated into her bed-room. With a cry of despair she left her couch, and seizing Hortense, who was peacefully sleeping in her little bed, she hurried out of the burning house, and forced her way with a mother's desperate courage through the crowd of fighting soldiers and negroes that filled the yard. Dressed only in a thin night-robe, she sped to the port, where the captain of a vessel, just entering his boat to return on board his ship, caught sight of the young woman with her infant clasped to her bosom, as she sank down exhausted by fear and exertion on the beach. Moved by compassion he hastened to assist her, and lifting both mother and child from the ground, carried them to his boat, which immediately quitting the land conveyed its fair burden on board the merchantman.

When the vessel was reached, Josephine, clasping her

child to her bosom, and happy in the thought of having saved what was dearest to her, clambered up the dizzy ladder. All her thoughts having been directed towards the child, it was not till Hortense had been placed in safety in the cabin that Josephine noticed how slightly she herself was dressed. When the mother had performed her duty, her feelings as a woman were aroused, and she looked fearfully and bashfully around her. Only half dressed in a light, fluttering night dress, with no other covering for her neck and bosom than her long floating hair, which enfolded her in a thick black veil, the youthful Vicomtesse de Beauharnois felt that she was attracting towards herself the curious looks of the crew and passengers.

Some ladies who happened to be on board kindly supplied her wants, and scarcely was her toilette finished ere she demanded to be taken back to the shore, in order to inquire after the fate of her mother. The captain of the vessel refused to comply with the young lady's wishes, fearful lest she should fall into the hands of the mutinous negroes, whose hideous yelling could be distinctly heard. The whole of the coast, as far as the eye was able to reach, seemed to be on fire, resembling a sea of flames, the raging waves of which appeared as it were to dash up columns of fire. It was a scene horrible to behold; and Josephine, no longer able to witness it, sought refuge in the cabin, where, kneeling down by the side of her slumbering child, she poured out her soul in prayer, begging God to have mercy on her poor mother.

After the ship had stood out to sea, she again came on deck, to look once more on the house under whose roof she had spent the days of her childhood, and which was now sinking fast under the fury of the flames. As with the increasing distance it gradually diminished in size and finally vanished, Josephine felt as if the star of her youth had gone down. She had just finished, as it seemed to her, a life of sweet dreaming and of cruel disappointment, and was about to commence another with wholly different pursuits and feelings. The past, like Cortez' vessels, had been destroyed by fire, but the flames that devoured it seemed for a moment to cast a magic light on the future. As she stood gazing on the disappearing shores of her native island, she remembered the words of an old negress who a few days before had whispered a strange prophecy in her ear.

"You will return to France," she said, "and will soon see that country at your feet. You will become a queen—ay, even mightier than a queen!"

CHAPTER II.

THE PROPHECY.

It was towards the end of 1790 when Josephine, with her daughter Hortense, arrived in Paris and took up her abode in a modest hotel. Here she soon afterwards heard that her mother had been saved, and that

tranquillity was restored to Martinique. In France, however, the Revolution continued with increasing fury. The guillotine and the banner of the reign of terror, the red flag, still threw their ghastly shadow over Paris. Fear and dismay had taken possession of every heart; no one was able to say at night whether the next morning he should be free, or whether he would live to see another sun set. Death was lurking at every door, and found an abundant harvest in every house, almost in every family. Amidst such horrors Josephine forgot the quarrels and humiliations of the past. Her old love to her husband awoke again, and as life was so uncertain, the danger so imminent, she desired once more to be reconciled with him, once more to embrace her son.

But all attempts to bring about such a reconciliation seemed to be futile. The Viscount had considered her flight to Martinique so great an insult, so deliberate an act of cruelty, that he appeared unwilling ever again to receive her into his arms. Some sympathizing friends of the young people, however, at last brought about an interview, though without consulting Monsieur de Beauharnois. His anger was very great, therefore, when, on entering the drawing-room of Count Montmorin, he caught sight of his wife, Josephine, whom he had so obstinately and angrily avoided. He was about to leave the salon, when a little girl with outstretched arms ran towards him, calling out "papa." The Viscount stood as if spell-bound, and found it impossible to be angry any longer. Taking up little Hortense he pressed her to his

heart. She innocently asked him to kiss mamma as he had kissed her. He looked at his wife, whose eyes were filled with tears; and when his father approached him, and said, "My son, be reconciled to my daughter, for Josephine is my daughter, and I should not call her so were she unworthy,"—when he saw Eugène run to the arms of his mother,—he could resist no longer. With Hortense in his arms he advanced towards his wife, who hid her face weeping on his breast, and burst into a cry of joy.

Thus peace was concluded, and the re-united couple loved each other more tenderly than ever they had done before. It seemed as if their matrimonial storms had passed, never to return, and as if from this instance they were to experience no more bitterness. But the Revolution was destined soon to blight their newly-born happiness.

The Viscount de Beauharnois had been chosen by the nobility of Blois to represent them in the States-General, but had resigned this dignity to serve his country with the sword instead of the tongue. With tears and prayers Josephine saw him depart for the army of the North, in which he held the rank of adjutant-general. A voice in her breast told her she would never see him again, and this voice did not deceive her. The spirit of anarchy and rebellion prevailed not only among the people, but also in the army which was under its sway. The aristocrats, who at Paris were falling victims to the guillotine, were looked upon with suspicious, hateful glances by the soldiers; and thus it happened that the Viscount de

Beauharnois, who, on account of his bravery in the battle of Soissons, had been promoted to the rank of commander-in-chief, was soon afterwards accused by his own officers of being an enemy to his country, and hostile to the new *régime*. He was arrested and sent as prisoner to Paris, where he was lodged in the dungeons of the Luxembourg, along with numerous other victims of the Revolution.

Josephine soon learned the melancholy fate of her husband, and the sad tidings roused her energy and love to action. She resolved either to free the father of her children, or to die with him. Regardless of danger, she braved every peril, every fear of suspicion, by which she might well have been deterred from the enterprise, and used every means in her power to obtain an interview with her husband, in order to offer him consolation and comfort.

But at that time even love and fidelity were looked upon as crimes deserving of death, and thus, being doubly guilty,—first, because she was an aristocrat herself, and, secondly, because she loved a nobleman, a traitor to his country,—Josephine was arrested and sent to the prison of St Pelagie.

Eugène and Hortense might now be considered orphans, for at that time the prisoners of the Luxembourg and St Pelagie never left their dungeons on any other journey but that to the scaffold. Isolated and deprived of all help, shunned by those who in former days had been their friends, the two children were exposed to hunger and misery. The fortune of their parents had been confiscated at the same hour

that Josephine was dragged to prison, and the doors of their house having been put under the seal of the government, the poor children had not even a roof under which to find shelter. However, they were not altogether forsaken; for Madame Holstein, a friend of Josephine's, had the courage to assist them, and to take them into her own house.

But it was necessary to proceed with great caution, in order not to excite the suspicion and hatred of those who, from the very dregs of the nation, had risen to be the rulers of France, and who were dyeing the purple of their power in the blood of the aristocracy. An inconsiderate word, an incautious look, might have been sufficient to make Madame Holstein an object of their suspicion, and to consign her to the guillotine. As it was considered a crime even to adopt the children of "traitors," it was absolutely necessary that everything should be done to lull the suspicions of those in power. Hortense, therefore, was obliged to join with her protectress in the solemn processions that took place upon each "decade" in honour of the Republic "one and indivisible;" but she was never called upon to take an active part in these festivities. The offspring of a viscount, of an imprisoned *ci-devant*, she was considered unworthy to rank with the daughters of the people. Eugène was apprenticed to a carpenter, and the son of the nobleman might frequently be seen passing along the streets dressed in a *blouse*, and carrying a piece of board on his shoulder or a saw under his arm.

Whilst the children thus enjoyed a life of moment-

ary security, the prospects of their parents grew darker and darker, for not only the life of General de Beauharnois, but that of his wife also, was seriously threatened. Josephine had been removed from the prison of St Pelagie to the convent of the Carmelites, and thus advanced another step towards the scaffold. But without trembling for her own fate, she thought only of her children and her husband. To the former she wrote affectionate letters, which she managed to have conveyed to them by means of a gaoler whom she had bribed, but all efforts to open up a communication with the Marquis proved vain.

Suddenly Josephine received intelligence that he had been carried before the tribunal of the Revolution. In awful suspense she waited from hour to hour the reception of further information. Had the tribunal acquitted her husband, or had he been sentenced to death? Was he free, or was he liberated already in a higher sense—was he dead? If he were free he would certainly have found means to inform her of his safety; if executed, why was not his name on the list of the condemned? Josephine passed a day of agony, and when night came she was unable to sleep. She, therefore, sat up in company with her companions in misfortune, who all, like her, expected soon to die.

The persons assembled in this prison were of high rank and birth. There were the Dowager-Duchess de Choiseul, the Vicomtesse de Maille—whose son, though only seventeen years of age, had just died on

the guillotine,—the Marchioness de Créqui, that witty woman who has often been called the last Marquise of the old *régime*, and who has left us in her Memoirs, although they are written with the prejudices of an aristocrat, the history of France during the eighteenth century. There was also that Abbé Texier, who, when called upon by the messengers of terrorism to take an oath of fidelity to the new government, and threatened upon refusal with hanging from a lantern-post, asked his assailants, "Will you see better, think you, if you hang me up at that lantern?" Finally, there was a M. Duvivier, a pupil of Cagliostro, who, like his master, was able to divine the future, and professed to read the mysterious enigmas of destiny by the aid of a decanter filled with water, and a "dove," that is to say, an innocent girl under seven years of age. To him, as the Grand Cophta, Josephine applied after this day of agonizing uncertainty, and demanded to know her husband's fate.

It was a strange scene that took place in the stillness of night, within the walls of the dark and lonely prison. The turnkey, bribed with a fifty-franc assignat, whose current value, however, did not exceed forty sous, had consented to his little daughter's playing the part of the "dove," and made all necessary preparations. In the middle of the room stood a table, on which was a decanter filled with water, round which three candles, forming a triangle, were placed. These candles were stationed as close as possible to the decanter, in order to enable the "dove" to see more plainly. The little girl, just taken from her

bed, and attired in her night-dress only, sat on a chair close to the table, the tall imposing figure of the seer standing behind her. The Duchesses and Marchionesses, who a short time ago had been the ladies of a brilliant court, and who still preserved the etiquette and manners of Versailles, had duly arranged themselves around. Those who in the Tuileries had enjoyed the proud privilege of the *tabouret*, had the precedence, and were treated with all possible respect. On the other side of the table stood the unfortunate Josephine, pale, her eyes fixed in awful suspense on the features of the little girl. In the background the gaoler and his wife were visible.

The seer now laid both his hands on the child's head, and said in a loud voice: "Open thy eyes and look!"

The child grew pale and shuddered as she looked at the decanter.

"What dost thou see?" the Cophta asked. "I command thee to look into the prison of General de Beauharnois; what seest thou?"

"I see," the child replied, in an excited manner, "a young man sleeping on a camp-bed. At his side there is another man, who is writing something on a sheet of paper that is lying on a great book."

"Canst thou read?"

"No, citizen! Oh, look! the gentleman cuts a lock from his hair and puts it in the paper."

"The one that sleeps?"

"No, no, the one who was writing just now. He

begins writing again, he writes something on the paper in which he put his hair; and now he takes out a small red pocket-book, he opens it, he counts something. There, he shuts it again, and walks noiselessly, oh, so noiselessly—"

"How so noiselessly, child? Didst thou hear the slightest noise before?"

"No, but he walks on his toes."

"What dost thou see now?"

"He covers his face with both hands; I think he weeps."

"Where does he leave his pocket-book?"

"Oh, *parbleu*, he puts it into the pocket of the sleeping man's coat, and the letter too."

"Of what colour is the coat?"

"I cannot see exactly, but I think it is red or brown, and it has shining buttons."

"That will do, child," said the seer; "return to bed."

He stooped to the girl and breathed on her forehead. She seemed as if awakening from a dream, and hastened to her parents, who led her away.

"General de Beauharnois is still alive," the Grand Cophta said, turning to Josephine.

"Yes, he lives," she said, sadly, "but he is making preparations for death."

She was right. A few days afterwards the Duchesse d'Anville received a letter, accompanied by a parcel, sent her by a prisoner in *La Force*, whose name was de Ségrais. He had been imprisoned in the same room with the Marquis de Beauharnois, and

had found, on the morning of the General's execution, the letter and parcel addressed to the Duchess in the pocket of his coat.

In this letter Beauharnois begged the Duchesse d'Anville to deliver to his wife the packet, which contained a lock of his hair and farewell lines addressed to her and his children.

This was the sole inheritance the unfortunate General left to his family. When Josephine received these tokens of affection, she was so much overpowered by grief that she fainted, and a stream of blood poured from her lips.

Her companions in misfortune hastened to assist her as far as was in their power, and besought the gaoler to go and call in a physician.

"What is the good of a physician?" the man asked, indifferently. "Death is the best doctor. This very day it cured the General, and in a day or two it will have cured his wife as well."

This prophecy nearly proved true. Josephine had hardly recovered a little, ere she received the act of accusation from the Tribunal of Terror. This was a sure sign of approaching death, and she began to prepare to meet it courageously, though thinking sorrowfully on her orphan children.

An unexpected event saved her life. The leaders of the terrorist government had reached the height of their power, and as there was no standing still in a career like theirs, they were soon precipitated from that dangerous eminence and hurled into the abyss which they had themselves dug.

The downfall of Robespierre opened the prison-doors of thousands who had already been doomed as victims to the monster Revolution. The Vicomtesse de Beauharnois amongst the rest was liberated, and allowed to join her beloved children ; but she left the prison a widow, and penniless, for her fortune, as well as that of her husband and of all other aristocrats, had been confiscated by the Republic "one and indivisible."

CHAPTER III.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE REVOLUTION.

France once more breathed freely. The Reign of Terror had passed by, and a milder and juster government held the reins of the poor quivering country. It was no longer a crime deserving of death to bear a noble name, to be better clothed than the *sansculottes*, to abstain from wearing a red cap, or to be related to an *emigré*. The guillotine, which for two years past had spread sorrow and tears in Paris, was allowed to rest after its horrible activity, and the Parisians once more found leisure to think of something else besides making their wills and preparing for death.

As the Parisians were allowed to call the present moment, at any rate, their own, they wished to enjoy it before it had passed away; before new days of anxiety should come to startle them out of their

newly-acquired security. They had wept so much that they were now eager to have a laugh ; they had lived so long in fear and mourning that they now longed for some amusement. The fair ladies of Paris whom the guillotine and the Reign of Terror had deprived of their authority, and driven from their throne, found courage sufficient to take up again the sceptre that had dropped from their hands, and to re-occupy the seat whence the tornado of the Revolution had swept them. Madame Tallien, the all-powerful wife of one of the five directors who now stood at the head of the French nation, Madame de Récamier, the friend of all the distinguished men of her age, and Madame de Staël, the daughter of Necker, and wife of the ambassador of Sweden, which country alone had acknowledged the republic of France,—these three ladies gave back to Paris her salons and réunions, her splendour and her fashions.

Paris looked quite different from what it had been a short time previously. Although the Church had not yet been publicly re-instated in her former authority, some persons were beginning again to profess their belief in the existence of a God. Robespierre had possessed the courage to place over the altars of the churches which had been transformed into temples dedicated to Reason, the inscription, "There is a Supreme Being" (*un être suprême*), and he was soon in his own person to experience that he had not been mistaken. Betrayed by his own companions, accused of wishing to raise himself to the rank of Dictator, to be a new Cæsar to the new republic, he stood as a

prisoner before that very tribunal of terror he himself had called into existence. At the very moment when he was busy signing sentences of death at the town-hall, a number of Jacobins and national guards forced the door of the Hôtel de Ville and arrested him. He tried to blow out his brains with a pistol, but the attempt was unsuccessful, and only ended in shattering one of his jaw-bones.

Bleeding profusely, he was dragged before Fouquier Tinville to hear his doom, and to be delivered afterwards into the hands of the executioner. In observance of the customary forms, however, he was first taken to the Tuileries, where the Committee of Public Safety were sitting in the bed-room of Marie Antoinette. To this room Robespierre was dragged, and insultingly thrown on a great table that stood in the centre, at which the day before he had been sitting, with power over the life and property of every Frenchman, signing sentences of death. These papers lay still scattered about, and were now the only bandage the suffering man had to staunch the blood which profusely flowed from his wound. It was strange to see how greedily they drank up the blood of him who had signed them. A *sansculotte*, who stood by, moved with compassion, gave Robespierre a rag from an old tricolour-flag, that he might cover the wound in his face. As the ex-dictator lay groaning amidst the blood-stained sentences, an old national guard raised his arm, and, pointing to the fearful spectacle, exclaimed, "Robespierre was right —there is a Supreme Being!"

The time of terror and blood had now passed. Robespierre was dead, Théroigne de Méricourt was no longer the goddess of reason, and Mademoiselle Maillard had ceased to typify liberty and virtue. The ladies, tired of playing the part of goddesses, and of representing symbolical figures, wished to be themselves again, and to erect once more in the drawing-room, through their wit and grace, that throne which the Revolution had shattered into fragments.

Madame Tallien, and Mesdames de Récamier and de Staël were the restorers of society at Paris, and every one was anxious to obtain admission into their salons. Their parties and réunions were certainly of a strange and fanciful nature. It seemed as if fashion, who had so long yielded to the Carmagnole and the red cap, was determined to have her revenge for a long exile by indulging all her caprices and extravagances. Sometimes she assumed quite a political and reactionary mien. The ladies no longer dressed their hair *à la Jacobine*, but *à la victime* and *au repentir*. To show a good classical taste they adopted the statuesque dress of ancient Greece and Rome. Greek festivals were held, in which the black broth of Lycurgus conspicuously figured, while at the Roman banquets a luxury and profusion were displayed, that made them worthy rivals of the feasts of Lucullus.

These Roman banquets took place generally in the Luxembourg, where the five directors of the republic had taken up their quarters, and where Madame Tallien made regenerated French society acquainted with the new marvels of luxury and fashion.

Too proud herself to wear the generally adopted dress of the Greek republic, Madame Tallien selected that of a patrician Roman lady. The flowing purple robes, embroidered with gold, and the glittering diadem that crowned her raven tresses, imparted to the beautiful republican the imposing appearance of an Imperatrix. She also assembled a brilliant court around her, for every one was eager to pay homage to the wife of the powerful Tallien, with the hope of gaining her favour. Her house became the gathering place of all who held an important post in Paris, or who were desirous to get into office. Whilst in the salon of Madame de Récamier, who in spite of the republic had continued to be a royalist, people whispered of the happy time of the Bourbons, and made sarcastic remarks on the republic,—whilst at Madame de Staël's house an asylum for the arts and sciences had been opened,—in the drawing-room of Madame de Tallien the present hour, and the splendour with which an exalted station surrounded the dictators, were alone enjoyed.

Josephine de Beauharnois and her children meanwhile lived in seclusion. The day came, however, when she was obliged to give up even the consolation of wretched reflections on her misfortunes, for poverty tapped at her door, and her children must be protected from hunger and misery. The Viscountess was forced to seek as a petitioner those who had the power of granting as a favour what was simply her right, and who might obtain for her a partial restoration of her fortune. Josephine had known

Madame Tallien when this lady was yet Madame de Fontenay. She now remembered this acquaintance for the sake of her children, for through her they might perhaps recover the inheritance of their father. Madame de Tallien, *la merveilleuse du Luxembourg*, whom her admirers also used to call *Notre dame de Thermidor*, feeling highly flattered that a real viscountess, who had occupied a distinguished place at the court of King Louis, should come to seek her patronage, received her with great kindness and endeavoured to make her her friend.

However it was no easy task to recover a confiscated fortune. Although the Republic was ever ready to take, it was not at all its custom to restore, and even the friendship of the powerful Madame Tallien was unable to relieve Josephine with the speed her distress required. The Viscountess suffered greatly, having to go with her children through the hard school of want and humiliation, which is the companion of poverty. But even in the midst of her misery she had some friends who spread a table for her and her children, and provided for their necessities. At that time it was hardly considered humiliating to accept benefits from friends, for those who had lost everything had lost it through no fault of their own, and those who had been fortunate enough to save their property in the general shipwreck, knew that they had to thank chance, and not their own merit and foresight, for it. They therefore considered it a sacred duty to share with those who had been less fortunate than themselves, and the latter

might, without a blush, accept the offering of friendship. The Revolution had given birth to a species of communism.

Josephine thankfully received the kindnesses of her friends, allowing Madame de Montmorin to clothe her and Hortense, and accepting the invitations which twice every week gave her a seat at the table of Madame Dumoulin. In the hospitable house of this lady there met, on certain days, a number of persons whom the Revolution had deprived of their fortunes. Madame Dumoulin, the wife of a wealthy army contractor, prepared on such occasions a dinner for her friends, but each guest was expected to bring his own bread with him, this article of food being considered a great luxury at the time. Grain was so scarce at Paris that the Republic passed a law, according to which, in each *section* of the city a certain number of loaves only were to be baked daily, each individual being allowed but two ounces. Under these circumstances it had become a customary thing to add to an invitation, "You are requested to bring your own bread," for sometimes it was altogether impossible to procure a larger quantity than was allowed by Government, and it was besides extremely dear. Josephine Beauharnois, however, could not afford to buy her two ounces. She was the only one who came unprovided to the dinners of Madame Dumoulin, but her kind hostess always managed to find a loaf for her and little Hortense.

However, the time had now arrived when the Viscountess de Beauharnois was to reach the end of

her distress. One day, when dining at the house of Madame Tallien, the Dictator told her that through his mediation "Government was willing to make some concessions in favour of the widow of a true patriot, who had fallen a victim to the prejudices of the time," and that he had received an order from the Administration of the Domains, according to which the seals were to be removed at once from all her movable property. The Republic also gave her an *assignat*, payable by the treasury, and promised that the sequestration should shortly be removed from her estates.

Josephine could not find words to express her thanks. Clasping her daughter to her heart, she exclaimed amid her tears, "We shall once more be happy, for my children will no longer suffer want!" These were the first tears of joy she had shed for many a year.

Want and misery were now over. Josephine was enabled to gave her children an education befitting their rank, whilst she herself was once more allowed to occupy that station in society which by birth, education, and amiability, she was entitled to fill. She no longer came as a mendicant to the house of Madame Tallien, for she was now the queen of that drawing-room, and every one hastened to pay homage to the young and beautiful viscountess who was known to be the intimate friend of their hostess. But Josephine, preferring the company of her children to the brilliant circles of the best society, withdrew more and more from this noisy life to devote herself to

her beloved Eugène and Hortense, whose characters became day by day more marked and interesting.

Eugène was now a youth of sixteen, and since his safety no longer demanded that he should conceal his name and deny his rank, he quitted the workshop of his master, and divested himself of the blouse. He astonished the teachers under whom he was preparing for the army by his zeal and unusual talent. The warlike glory and the brave deeds of the French army swelled his bosom with enthusiasm, and once, when one of his masters spoke of the feats of Turenne, Eugène exclaimed with glistening eyes, "I too shall one day be a great general."

Hortense, who was by this time twelve years of age, lived with her mother, who was but a woman of thirty, on the footing of a younger sister rather than that of a daughter. They were always together. Nature had endowed Hortense with beauty, and under the influence of her mother sweetness and grace were added to her personal charms. Able teachers instructed her mind, whilst Josephine educated the heart. Early accustomed to anxiety and distress, to want and misery, the child did not possess that carelessness and levity of disposition commonly found in girls of her age. She had seen too much of the instability and vanity of earthly grandeur not to despise those trifles that are generally so much valued by young girls. It was not the object of her ambition to dress handsomely, and to bend her neck under the yoke of fashion. She knew greater pleasures than those found in the gratification

of vanity, and was never happier than when her mother excused her from going to the parties of Madame Tallien or of Barras. She would amuse herself at home with her books and harp, which certainly afforded her greater enjoyment than was to be found in the drawing-rooms of "good society."

Hortense had acquired in the school of misfortune a premature ripeness of mind, which imparted to the girl of twelve the staidness and independence of feeling of a woman; but her lovely features still bore the expression of childhood, and in her deep blue eye there was a heaven of peace and innocence.

When in the hour of twilight she sat in the window niche, with her harp by her side, the last beams of the setting sun gilding her features and shedding a halo round her head, she might have been fancied one of those angels of innocence and love whom the pencil of the artist and the poet's song have brought before us. Josephine used to listen with something like devotion to the sweet melodies her daughter drew from her harp, to which, with a silvery voice, she sang lines written by herself, passionate, but full of childlike innocence, the faithful mirror of her innermost feelings, the true image of the young innocent girl who had arrived at the boundary

> "Where the brook and river meet,
> Womanhood and childhood sweet."

CHAPTER IV.

GENERAL BONAPARTE.

Whilst Josephine, after many a year of misery and privation, thus enjoyed sunny days, France was still agitated by occasional blasts of that storm which had thrown her into confusion. The country did not as yet enjoy a permanent peace. The clubs, those hot-houses of revolution, still exercised a pernicious influence over the inhabitants of Paris, continually instigating the masses to discontent and rebellion.

But the man who was to crush these masses under his iron heel, and to silence the orators of the clubs with a flash of his commanding eye, at last emerged from the crowd. This man was Napoleon Bonaparte.

He was scarcely twenty-nine years of age, but already all France spoke of him as a laurel-crowned hero, who had left a track of brilliant victories behind him. As commandant of a battalion he had distinguished himself by his daring bravery at the re-capture of Toulon, and after his promotion to the rank of general he had been sent to Italy. When he returned as a victor to France, the Government, hostile to the General of twenty-five, and perhaps afraid of his genius, wished to send him as a brigadier-general of infantry to La Vendée. Bonaparte

declining this mission, because he wished to serve in the artillery, the Republic deprived the young general of his command and placed him on half-pay.

Thus Bonaparte remained in Paris, waiting until his star should again rise. And it rose with such brilliant splendour that it dazzled the eyes of the world! Had he already a prevision of his future greatness?

His days in Paris passed in monotonous succession. They were spent in meditation and in the society of a few faithful friends, who assisted him with kind delicacy in his poverty. Bonaparte, as is well known, was poor. He had lost during the Revolution the little he had; and now he possessed nothing but the laurels he had won on the battle-fields of Italy and his half-pay as a brigadier-general. But, like Josephine, he had faithful friends, who considered it an honour to see him at their table, and who even provided him with bread; for he, too, like Josephine, was too poor to buy it. He and his brother Louis took their dinner frequently at the house of an early friend, Bourrienne, who afterwards became Napoleon's secretary. They used to bring their rations of ammunition bread with them, but Madame Bourrienne always took care that they should find some white bread by their plates. Having smuggled some flour into Paris from Bourrienne's country-seat, she had bribed a pastry-cook to bake bread for them, a proceeding which, if detected, would undoubtedly have led her and all concerned to the guillotine.

Bonaparte thus lived quietly in the midst of his friends, waiting for a change in his fortunes, and hoping that his wishes would be realized as soon as the present Government should be superseded by another. His ambition appears at that time to have been very modest, for he once said to Bourrienne, "If I could live comfortably in Paris, rent the little house opposite, with my friends for *vis-à-vis*, and keep a cabriolet, I should be the happiest of men."

He was seriously thinking of renting "the little house opposite," together with his uncle Fesch (the future cardinal), when important events once more agitated the capital of France, and recalled his attention to public affairs. The thirteenth Vendémiaire, 1795, drew the young general from his obscurity, and gave him back all his energy and ambition. It was on this fifth day of October that the storm burst, which for a long time had been gathering over Paris. The sections rose in rebellion against the National Convention, who had presented France with a new constitution, and decreed that two-thirds of their members should enter the new legislative body. The sections of Paris, however, were unwilling to accept the constitution, unless an entirely new election should regulate the formation of the law-giving assembly. The Convention, resolved to defend what they considered their right, called upon the representatives, who commanded the armed forces, to protect the Republic. Barras was chosen commander-in-chief of the Army of the Interior, and Bonaparte

received the second command. It soon came to a sanguinary conflict between the soldiery and the mutinous sections, but as at that time the tactics of barricade fighting were still in their infancy, the insurgents were soon obliged to fall back before the destructive fire of a well-directed artillery. Retreating into the church of St. Roch and on the Palais Royal, they fortified their positions, but were again dislodged, and the contest in the streets recommenced.

At the end of two days, during which blood flowed in streams, Barras informed the victorious Convention that peace had been restored, a result which the courage and caution of General Bonaparte had considerably contributed to bring about.

The National Convention rewarded Napoleon's zeal by confirming him in the post which he had held provisionally in the hour of danger. From this day he belongs to history; his star had commenced to rise on the horizon of fame.

Napoleon, having now a position in the state, began to understand the voice in his heart that spoke to him of proud victories and of a great future. He felt that there was a prize before him which was worthy of a struggle; and, although he was as yet unable to give a name to it, he was resolved to win it.

One day a youth came to the house of the young General, urgently demanding to speak with him. Bonaparte allowed him to enter. Struck with the

bold and noble bearing of the young man, he kindly inquired what he wished.

"General," the youth replied, "my name is Eugène Beauharnois. I am the son of a *ci-devant*, the General Beauharnois who served the Republic on the Rhine. My father was calumniated by his enemies and handed over to the tribunal of the Republic, which murdered him three days before the fall of Robespierre."

"Murdered?" said Napoleon, with a threatening voice.

"Yes, General, murdered!" Eugène replied boldly. "I now come to ask you, in the name of my mother, to exercise your influence with the committee for the restoration of my father's sword. I will use it to fight the enemies of my country, and to defend the cause of the Republic."

This haughty language called a smile of approbation to the pale cheek of the young General, and his eye had an expression of benevolence as he said,—

"Well spoken, young man! I like your courage and your filial piety. You shall have the sword of your father. Wait a moment."

Napoleon called one of his aides-de-camp, to whom he gave the necessary orders, and the officer soon returned with the sword of the defunct General de Beauharnois.

Bonaparte himself handed it to Eugène. The young man in deep emotion pressed it to his heart, whilst tears silently welled from his eyes.

The General approached him, and, laying his soft white hand on the youth's shoulder, said, in a sympathizing voice,—

"My young friend, I should be happy if I could do anything for you or your mother."

Eugène wiped away his tears, and looked up with an expression of childish astonishment.

"You are very kind, General; mamma and my sister will pray for you."

The artless reply called a smile to the General's face. Nodding kindly, he told Eugène to give his compliments to his mamma, and visit him again soon.

This meeting of Eugène with General Bonaparte was the beginning of the acquaintance of Napoleon and Josephine. The sword of the beheaded Marquis de Beauharnois placed an imperial diadem on the brow of his widow, and exalted his children to royalty.

CHAPTER V.

THE MARRIAGE.

A FEW days after this occurrence, Josephine met the young General at one of the brilliant soirées given by Barras the Commander-in-chief. She asked the latter to introduce her to his colleague, and when presented to Bonaparte she offered her hand in the

frank but modest manner peculiar to her, thanking him for the kindness he had shown her son.

Bonaparte looked with astonishment upon this beautiful young woman, who called herself the mother of a grown-up son. Her features still possessed all the charms of youth, her dark fiery eye bespoke a passionate disposition, whilst the sweet, animated smile that played round her lips indicated a kind heart and womanly modesty.

Napoleon never understood the art of flattering women in the easy and pleasing manner of a *petit maître*. Whenever he tried to do so he failed. His compliments, which were sometimes of the most awkward and ludicrous nature, might even have been taken for insults. When emperor, he once said to the beautiful Duchesse de Chevreuse,* "How fine that red hair of yours looks!" "Very probably," the lady replied, "but I assure you it is the first time I was ever told such a thing." On another occasion he remarked to a belle whose fair arm had attracted his attention, "Mon Dieu, que votre bras est roux!" and to another, "You have really very beautiful hair, but your way of arranging it displays a horribly bad taste."

Bonaparte, we repeat, did not know how to flatter with words, but he understood the language of the eye, which Josephine had no difficulty in translating. She knew that from this hour she led the young lion captive, and she was happy in the consciousness of

* The Duchess of Chevreuse soon afterwards was banished to Tours, because she refused to serve the Queen of Spain as a lady of honour.

it, for her own heart, which she had long believed dead, beat for the youthful hero.

They began to meet frequently, and Josephine soon heard the confession of Napoleon's love. She returned his passion and promised him her hand. In vain did her powerful friends, Barras and Tallien, advise her not to marry the young General, who was poor, and who might be killed in one of the next battles, leaving her a widow a second time. Resolved to follow her own inclination, she shook her little head with a meaning smile. Did she remember the prophecy of the old negress? Did she read on Bonaparte's lofty forehead and in his fiery eye that he was the man who could realize it? Or did she love him so passionately as to prefer a humble lot by his side to a more advantageous marriage?

However this may have been, the counsels of her friends proved ineffectual to shake her resolution, as she had made up her mind to become the wife of the poor officer. The day of their marriage was fixed, and both began to make preparations for the establishment of their household. Bonaparte had not yet been able to realize his *rêve de bonheur;* for he possessed neither horse nor cabriolet. As Josephine also was without a carriage, they were obliged to walk through the streets, a mode of progress which they probably preferred, since it allowed them opportunities for uninterrupted conversation, undisturbed by the rattling of the wheels. Napoleon often enjoyed the satisfaction of hearing Josephine's beauty admired as they walked along. Then a smile would glide

over his face. Josephine was equally happy, for when the people gathered to have a look at the hero of the 15th of Vendémiaire, and whispered his name as he passed, his affianced bride was justly proud of the man she had chosen in spite of the opposition of her friends, and to whom she looked for the realization of the prophecy.

One day Bonaparte accompanied the Viscountess to Mons. Ragideau, the smallest man, but the greatest lawyer, of Paris, who for a long time had been the adviser of the Beauharnois family, and who was now to procure her the money for the furniture of her house. Bonaparte remained in the ante-chamber, whilst Josephine entered the office.

"I have called to tell you that I intend to marry again," Josephine said to M. Ragideau, with her delicious smile.

The little solicitor nodded approvingly.

"You do well," he replied, "and I congratulate you sincerely, for your choice cannot fail to be a good one."

"Certainly it is a good one," Josephine answered, with the happy pride of a loving woman; "my future husband is General Napoleon Bonaparte."

The little lawyer started up with terror.

"What! you, the Viscountess de Beauharnois, mean to marry that little General Bonaparte, that General of the Republic, which has already dismissed him once, and may dismiss him again to-morrow?"

Josephine simply answered, "I love him."

"Yes, you may love him now," the man of law

replied, in his well-meant zeal, "still you ought not to marry him, for you will one day regret it. I say again, that you are making a mistake, Viscountess, committing an act of folly, in marrying this man, who has nothing he can call his own but his sword and his cloak."

"But who has in addition a great future," Josephine replied joyfully; and changing the conversation, she began to speak about the matters that had brought her to the office.

When the business with the solicitor was terminated, Josephine returned to the ante-room, where the General was waiting for her. Approaching her with a smile, he gave M. Ragideau, who followed her, such a glance of anger and contempt, that the little man started back in dismay. Josephine also noticed that Bonaparte's face was paler than usual, and that he spoke less than was generally his custom. She had learned by this time, however, that it was advisable, in such cases, not to ask him any questions, and therefore took no notice of his ill-temper, a plan by which she soon succeeded in dispersing the cloud on his brow.

The marriage of Bonaparte and Josephine took place on the 9th of March, 1796, the witnesses being, in addition to Eugène and Hortense Beauharnois, Barras, Jean Lemarois, Tallien, Calmelet, and Leclerq.

The civil certificate contained a mistake that must have been flattering to Josephine. Bonaparte, in order to produce an apparent equality between his

own age and that of his bride, had represented her as four years younger than she really was, while he had added more than a twelvemonth to his own age. Bonaparte was not born on the 5th of February, 1768, as stated in the marriage certificate, but on the 15th of August, 1769; and Josephine's birthday was not the 23rd of July, 1767, but the 23rd of June, 1763.

Josephine rewarded Bonaparte in a princely manner for his delicate flattery. On his wedding day he received the command-in-chief of the army of Italy, for which promotion he was indebted to the interest his wife possessed with Barras and Tallien.

Before the young husband went to the scene of war, where he was to gain new laurels and new fame, he spent a few happy weeks in the arms of his wife. He lived with his family in a small house in the Rue Chantereine, which he had bought some time previously, and which had been tastefully furnished by Josephine.

Thus one half of Bonaparte's *rêve de bonheur* had become reality; he possessed a house of his own. The cabriolet was the only thing wanting to make him "the happiest of men."

Unfortunately, a man's desires always increase with their satisfaction; and Bonaparte, soon ceasing to be content with a house in Paris, wished to have one in the country also. "Please to look out," he wrote to Bourrienne, who was then living on his estate near Sens, "please to look out for some pro-

perty in your beautiful valley of the Yonne that might suit me. I should like to retire, only mind I will not have any national property."

As for the cabriolet, the peace of Campo Formio gave the victorious General a magnificent team of six white horses, a present from the Emperor of Austria to the General of the Republic. Did the Emperor, at that time, imagine for a moment that this General ten years afterwards would be his son-in-law ?

These six splendid horses, however, were the only things Bonaparte brought back from Italy, if we except the laurels he gained at Arcola, Marengo, and Mantua, and were the only present he did not refuse to accept.

They could not be harnessed to a cabriolet, it is true; but they looked very stately when drawing the glittering carriage in which the first consul, a year afterwards, made his solemn entry into the Tuileries.

CHAPTER VI.

BONAPARTE IN ITALY.

JOSEPHINE, as we have said, spent some happy weeks in Paris, but they were few in number After Bonaparte had set out for Italy she felt very lonely; the more so because she was not only obliged to take leave of her husband, but of her children too.

Eugène accompanied his step-father to Italy, and Hortense was sent to school at the establishment of Madame Campan.

This lady, who had once been woman of the bedchamber to Queen Marie Antoinette, had established a *pension* at St Germain, to which the leading families of revolutionary France sent their daughters, that they might acquire the courtly manners and graceful ease of old royalist France.

Hortense remained for several years at the school at St Germain, where she had the company of her aunt Caroline, Bonaparte's sister (the same who afterwards became Queen of Naples), and of her cousin, the young Countess Stephanie de Beauharnois.

These years were spent in study, and in the pleasant dreams of maidenhood. Hortense worked hard. She learned several languages, music, and drawing, as well as history and geography. No inconsiderable part of her time was given to the task of acquiring the manners of fashionable society, and that aristocratic *savoir vivre*, of which no one was a more perfect mistress than Madame Campan. The young girl's education was intrusted to the best masters. Isabey taught her drawing, Lambert singing; Coulon was her dancing-master, and the celebrated Alvimara gave her lessons on the harp. There was an amateur theatre at Madame Campan's establishment, on the boards of which Hortense performed heroic and sentimental parts; and balls and concerts were frequently given by the *directrice*, to

parade before the *élite* of society the accomplishments of her pupils. Thus Hortense was educated as a lady. Very probably she did not then think how important these apparently trivial matters would prove some day, or realize the benefit she was afterwards to derive from having been at Madame Campan's establishment, learning there to appear in society as a *grande dame*.

Josephine in the meanwhile progressed from triumph to triumph. Her husband's star rising higher and higher, the name of Bonaparte was re-echoed throughout the world, and made Europe tremble with the presentiment of future misfortune. Bulletin on bulletin announcing victories in Italy arrived. States appeared to be crumbling away under the young General's brazen heels, and new ones were formed on their ruins.

The old Venetian Republic, which had once been the terror of the entire world, the victorious Queen of the Mediterranean, was now forced to bend its haughty neck, and to lie broken at the feet of the conqueror. The lion of St Mark no longer made the world tremble with its roar; and the lofty pillars that stand on the Piazetta, in memory of the victories of yore, were the only trophies decaying Venice could save of her conquest of Candia, the Morea, and Cyprus. But from the dust and ashes of the Venetian Republic rose by Bonaparte's command a new state, which was called the Cisalpine Republic, the first-born daughter of republican France. The last doge of Venice, Luigi Manin, was forced, fainting

in the effort, to lay his pointed crown at the feet of Napoleon, and another Venetian, of the name of Dandolo, was placed at the head of the new Republic. Dandolo sprang from a noble family, which had given to Venice her greatest and most illustrious doges, and by Bonaparte's own testimony was himself "a man." "Mon Dieu," said Napoleon one day to Bourrienne, "how rare it is to meet with men in this world! There are eighteen millions of souls living in Italy, but I have only found two men amongst them, Dandolo and Melzi."

But whilst despairing of men in the midst of his victories, Bonaparte preserved his ardent and longing love for a woman to whom, almost daily, he wrote the tenderest letters, and whose answers he awaited with the greatest impatience.

Josephine's letters alone did not suffer from the strange and singular custom which Bonaparte adopted during one period of his Italian campaign, that of throwing all letters that arrived, with the exception of those brought by extraordinary couriers, into a large basket, where they remained unopened until twenty-one days had elapsed. He was not quite so harsh as the Cardinal Dubois, who, burning every letter the moment it arrived, used to say, while looking with a sardonic smile at the flames that might be devouring the petition of a despairing mother, or of a disconsolate wife, "*Voilà ma correspondence faite!*" Bonaparte at least read his letters, although they had to wait for three weeks, a delay which saved him and his secretary Bourrienne a considerable amount of

labour, for when they were opened circumstances had probably rendered the answering of four-fifths of them unnecessary. Bonaparte used to laugh heartily at so unexpected a result, and was very much pleased with his "happy idea."

Josephine's letters, however, had to wait not an hour, nor a minute, to be read. Bonaparte always received them with a beating heart, and answered them in such passionate expressions as could only be dictated by his hot Corsican blood. In comparison with his glowing epistles those of Josephine seemed cold and unimpassioned.

Marmont tells us in his Memoirs, that at Verona Bonaparte, happening to break the glass of Josephine's miniature, turned pale and said, "Marmont, my wife is either very ill or unfaithful."

Bonaparte soon wished to see more of Josephine than her letters. Scarcely had the fury of war somewhat abated ere he summoned her to Milan. She gladly obeyed the call, and hastening to Italy joined her husband, with whom she spent days of lofty triumph and of gratified love. All Italy shouted "Welcome!" to the victorious hero, and paid homage to the woman who bore his name, and whose loveliness and affability, whose beauty and grace, had won all hearts. Her life at that time resembled a glorious triumphal procession, an intoxicating festival. The scenes amid which she lived were more like those of romance than of reality.

CHAPTER VII.

CHANCES AND CHANGES OF FORTUNE.

Bonaparte, on his return from Italy, made a brilliant and triumphal entry into Paris. In front of the Luxembourg, where the *Corps Legislatif* used to hold their sittings, a large amphitheatre had been erected, in the midst of which stood an altar to patriotism, surrounded by three large statues, representing Liberty, Equality, and Peace, and by all the notabilities of France.

When Bonaparte entered this square, all the men who crowded the seats of the amphitheatre rose and uncovered their heads to salute the conqueror of Italy, whilst the open windows of the palace were filled with handsomely-dressed ladies, who welcomed the young hero with waving handkerchiefs. This solemn scene was suddenly interrupted by a fatal accident. An officer of the Directory, who, impelled by curiosity, had climbed to the top of the scaffolding of the right wing of the Luxembourg, then under repair, fell from his eminence and died at Bonaparte's feet. A cry of horror rent the air; the ladies turned pale and withdrew from the windows, and through the ranks of the *Corps Legislatif* there spread a sudden consternation. Here and there a subdued whisper might be heard, intimating that the fall of the official boded no good to the Directory, whose servant he was, and that it

would soon lie like him at the feet of the victorious General.

In spite of this presentiment of danger, however, the Directory eagerly honoured the victor of Arcola with daily festivities. When Bonaparte at the end of such banquets returned home, exhausted with speeches and toasts, there was still the people of Paris to be satisfied, who surrounded him on his way, and whose shouts and congratulations he was obliged to return by nods and becks and wreathed smiles.

The French nation seemed intoxicated with joy. Every one saw in Bonaparte his own glory, considered him the most brilliant incarnation of his own self, and therefore loved him with a sort of enraptured delight.

Josephine enjoyed these glorious days with her whole soul, while Bonaparte, as if shy and embarrassed, evaded the ovations of the Parisians. While, in the theatre, he endeavoured to screen himself behind his wife's chair, she felt her heart dilate with pride and satisfaction, and would thank the public for the proofs of their love, and for the homage they paid to her "Achilles."

But Bonaparte did not allow himself to be blinded by these honours. One day, when the enthusiasm of the public rose to an unusual height and the cries of "Vive Bonaparte!" seemed to be almost interminable, Josephine turned to him and said,—

"See how these good Parisians love you!"

"Pshaw!" Napoleon answered, "they would press around me quite as eagerly were I on my way to the guillotine."

At last the festivities and demonstrations ceased, and life once more began to flow in a calm and natural current. Bonaparte was living in his own house in the Rue Chantereine, which had been splendidly furnished by Josephine. This street soon afterwards received the name of Rue de la Victoire, in honour of the hero of Arcola and Marengo, who was now resting from his triumphs in the arms of his wife, with whom he spent days of the purest happiness.

This state of inactivity, however, soon weighed heavily on his mind. He longed for new deeds, for new victories. He felt that he had only just begun his career of greatness. Waking and in his dreams he heard the war-trumpet sounding in his ear, which seemed to call him to the battle-field. Love might refresh his heart, but it was ever unable to fill it. Inactivity appeared to him like the commencement of death.

"If I remain here much longer without doing anything," he said, "I am lost. The Parisians have a short memory for everything. In this Babylon extraordinary things follow each other in so rapid a succession that I shall soon be forgotten if I cannot show something new."

Accordingly he undertook a new and unheard-of enterprise, that excited the astonishment of all Europe. He left France with an army to conquer for the Republic old Egypt, on whose pyramids the dust of forgotten ages lay accumulated.

Josephine, who did not accompany her husband, remained in Paris. Requiring consolation and encour-

agement in her solitude, which Bonaparte had said might last six months or six years, she found it in the presence of her daughter. She had handed over her son to her husband, who took him with him to Egypt, but the daughter being left to her, she now recalled her from school.

Hortense's education was by this time finished. The child who, two years ago, had entered the establishment of Madame Campan, left it a lovely, blooming young woman, possessing all the charms of innocence and youth, of grace and refinement. Hortense, although now sixteen years of age, still had the childish gaiety, the unsuspecting innocence of girlhood. Her heart resembled the unsullied page on which no profane hand had dared as yet to inscribe an earthly name. She only loved her mother, her brother, the arts, and flowers. She felt a sort of awe for her young step-father. His fiery eye terrified her, his imperious voice made her heart tremble; she looked up to him with too much veneration to be able to love him. To her he was always the hero, the lord, the father to whom she owed implicit obedience, but never the object of tender affection.

Hortense looked into the future with that childish curiosity which makes the eye behold the world through the rose-coloured light of fancy. She expected some great and brilliant event that should make her perfectly happy, without, however, knowing, or endeavouring to know, what it would be. She still loved all men, and believed in their faith-

fulness and sincerity. No sting had as yet wounded her heart, no blighted hope, no illusion destroyed, had thrown a shade of discontentedness upon her smooth forehead. Her blue eye beamed with joy and happiness, and her mirth was so hearty and innocent, that it sometimes made her mother feel melancholy. She well knew that the happy period when life stands before us like the golden dream of morn could not long endure.

Such was Hortense when her mother recalled her from the *pension* at St Germain, to go with her to the watering-place of Plombières.

At this place Hortense nearly lost this affectionate parent. One day, when with Josephine and some other ladies in the drawing-room, the window opening on the balcony was thrown back, to admit the warm air of a summer breeze. Hortense, who was sitting near the window, was occupied in drawing a bouquet of field-flowers, which she had gathered on the neighbouring mountains. Josephine, finding the air in the room sultry, proposed to the ladies who were with her that they should adjourn to the balcony. Suddenly there was a loud crash and confused cries. Hortense started up and beheld her mother precipitated into the street, with the balcony and all the ladies that were with her. In the first intensity of grief, she would have thrown herself after her mother, had she not been withheld by force. But Providence had been merciful. Josephine had suffered no injury beyond the fright and a slight bruise

on her arm. One of the ladies unfortunately had both legs broken.

Josephine was not yet to die. The prophecy of the fortune-teller had not been fulfilled. Though she was the wife of a celebrated general, she was not yet more than a queen!

CHAPTER VIII.

BONAPARTE'S RETURN FROM EGYPT.

BONAPARTE had returned from Egypt. The victory of Aboukir had added a new leaf to the laurel wreaths that encircled his brow. The whole French nation hailed the returning hero. Hortense, for the first time taking an active share in the festivities that were given by the city of Paris to her step-father, saw the reverential homage that was paid to the conqueror of Egypt by both sexes, by old and young.

These festivities and ovations half alarmed her, whilst at the same time they filled her heart with delight. The young girl recollected the prison wherein her mother had pined, remembered the scaffold on which the head of her father had fallen, and often, when looking at the richly embroidered, glittering uniform of her brother, did she think of the time when as a carpenter's apprentice Eugène used to

walk through the streets of Paris, clothed in a blouse and with a plank on his shoulder.

The remembrance of the sorrowful years of her childhood prevented the growth of pride and haughtiness within Hortense's heart. She retained that spirit of modesty and moderation which kept her from being presumptuous in happiness, and gave her courage and hope in misfortune. She could never be persuaded into a belief in the continuance of greatness, her early recollections always keeping her eyes open to sober reality. Therefore, when the storms of life arrived, she was prepared to meet and resist them.

Still she enjoyed these days of sunshine. She was happy to see her dearly beloved mother crowned with the diadem of glory and love, and in the name of her murdered father she felt the liveliest gratitude towards General Bonaparte, who had brightened the existence of a woman who during her first marriage had suffered so much.

But, alas! new clouds were soon to darken their happiness, and to interrupt the pursuits of peace and its enjoyments. Another revolution became imminent. France once more was to become the theatre of civil war, and Paris soon assumed the aspect of a great camp, divided into two hostile factions, who burned to annihilate one another. On one side stood the democratic Republicans, who regretted that the days of blood and terrorism were past, because peace would wrest the reins of dominion from their grasp, and who were therefore resolved to consolidate their

power by the aid of terror. This party called upon the *sansculottes* and Red Republicans of the clubs to defend their country. Declaring liberty and the constitution to be in danger, they pointed with menacing hand at Napoleon as the man who wished to overthrow the Republic, in order again to fetter France with the chains of tyranny.

On the other side were the cautious patriots, the Republicans *par force*, who inwardly detested the Republic, and had only taken the oath of fidelity in order to preserve their necks from the guillotine. Among them were the men of genius, artists and poets, who looked forward to a new era, because they knew that a time of terrorism and a tyrannizing democracy are quite as fatal to the cultivation of the muses as to human life. On this side too were the merchants, landowners, bankers, and tradespeople, who all wished to see the Republic established on a more moderate basis, in order that they might have confidence in its stability, and be able to recommence the pursuits of peace with a surer conviction of success. At the head of this moderate party stood Bonaparte.

The 18th Brumaire, 1798, was the time appointed for the decision. On that day a fierce struggle took place, though not a very sanguinary one. Principles chiefly were killed, and not men.

The Council of the Aged, the Council of the Five Hundred, the Directory, and the Constitution of the Year III, all were overthrown, and out of the ruins of the blood-stained Red Democratic Republic arose the moderate commonwealth of 1798. At its head

stood three consuls: Bonaparte, Cambacères, and Lebrun.

On the day after the 18th of Brumaire these three consuls, amidst the acclamations of the people, made their entrance into the Palais Luxembourg, and slept as victors in the beds which, but yesterday, had been occupied by the members of the Directory.

From this day a new era began. Etiquette, which, during the time of the Democratic Republic of France, had hidden itself in the remotest corner of the Luxembourg, or of the Tuileries, began to show itself again in open daylight. It was no longer necessary to deny, in homage to the principle of equality, all difference of rank or education, by the use of the word "citizen:" people were no longer compelled to endure, in the name of fraternity, the insolent familiarity of the hero of the street; and it was no longer expected that people should sacrifice personal liberty and ease on the altar of freedom.

Etiquette, therefore, left its hiding-place, and received the three consuls with the word "Monsieur." Josephine, who came the next day to occupy, with her daughter, the rooms that had been prepared for them in the Luxembourg, was also addressed as "Madame." A twelvemonth before, the words Monsieur and Madame had been the cause of risings and bloodshed. General Augereau had addressed an order of the day to his division, interdicting the use, either with lip or pen, of these terms of respect, and

had threatened transgressors with expulsion from the army, as unworthy to serve under the banners of the Republic.

These proscribed words now re-entered, with the three consuls, the Luxembourg, which had been freed from the democratic tyrants.

Josephine was now, at any rate, Madame Bonaparte; Hortense, Mademoiselle Beauharnois. The former was also permitted to keep a greater number of servants, and to live in a more brilliant manner generally, than had hitherto been her wont. There was indeed no such thing, as yet, as a court, or ladies of honour, and the Luxembourg was not a very spacious residence; but the day was near at hand when Monsieur and Madame were to change their humble title into "Your Majesty," and when the Tuileries were to receive the inmates of the Luxembourg.

The latter palace soon proved too small for the three consuls; too small for Bonaparte's ambition, who disliked living in close proximity with the men who shared the supreme power. Ambitious wishes were now rising in Bonaparte's heart, which urged him onward in his career to greatness. He now knew to what he aspired. What but a short time ago had appeared to him like the *fata morgana* of his dreams, had become the object of sober reflection. However, it was no easy task to open the way to the palace of the Bourbons! Till then the representatives of the people had held their sittings in the Tuileries. It was impossible suddenly to turn out these men; such a

measure would have roused at once the suspicions of all true Republicans, from whom the wish of restoring the monarchy must carefully be hidden. It was necessary, before removing to the Tuileries, to make the people believe that a man might be a good republican, even though he entertained the desire to sleep in the bed-chamber of a King.

Before, therefore, the consuls changed their residence, the Palace of the Tuileries was ornamented and altered in a manner befitting its new destiny. In one of its galleries was placed the bust of the elder Brutus, which had been brought by Napoleon from Italy; and Monsieur David was employed to add more statues, representing heroes of Republican Greece or Rome, which were distributed through various rooms.

A number of Republicans, who after the 13th of Vendémiaire had been banished, received leave to return to France; and as the news of Washington's death had just arrived, Napoleon ordered that the army should mourn for ten days. Each soldier had to wear a stripe of crape round his arm, and the regimental colours and bugles were wrapt up in the same emblem of mourning. When these ten days had passed away, and France and her army had sufficiently manifested their grief for the death of the great Republican, the three consuls made their entry into the Tuileries. They entered by the great front-gate, on either side of which stood a tree of liberty, bearing the Republican inscriptions of 1792. The tree on the right bore the date, "10th of August," whilst that

on the left displayed the following motto :—"Royalty has been prostrated in France, and will never rise again!"

Between these two suggestive trees Bonaparte and his colleagues entered the palace. A long line of carriages followed them, enlivening the streets of Paris, but the splendour and magnificence that afterwards characterized the solemnities of Imperial France were still wanting. There was but one brilliant carriage, that wherein the consuls were seated, which was drawn by the six white horses that had been given to Napoleon by the Emperor of Austria. Most of the other vehicles were hackney-coaches, the numbers of which had been covered over with paper. New France had not yet had time to get her state-carriages built, and those of Old France had been so horribly defiled that they had become valueless for ever. In the September days of 1793 they had been used as hearses for the carcases of dogs.

At that time there were thousands of masterless dogs in Paris, which had formerly belonged to the aristocracy, but now roamed about at pleasure, feeding on the blood that flowed in torrents from the guillotine, and discoloured the streets of Paris. This horrible nourishment had restored to these dogs all their innate ferocity and blood-thirstiness. Those who had been lucky enough to escape the guillotine were now in danger of being torn to pieces by these furious animals; and, as these new enemies of the Republic made no distinction between aristocrats and Republicans, but attacked both with equal im-

partiality, it became necessary to destroy them. An armed force, therefore, surrounded the Champs Elysées, drove their canine adversaries through the Rue Royale to the Place Royale, and there killed them by musketry discharges. Within a single day upwards of 3000 dogs were destroyed, whose bodies lay scattered about in the streets, where they remained for three days, a dispute having arisen amongst the authorities as to whose business it was to remove them.

At last, compelled by necessity, the Convention took it upon themselves to look to the matter, and gave orders to Monsieur Gasparin to take the necessary measures. This gentleman contrived to convert the burial of these canine victims into a Republican demonstration. As the animals had belonged to the *ci-devants* it was but fair that they should be carried to their graves with aristocratic honours.

Gasparin having collected all the state-carriages of the murdered or exiled nobility, in these glittering vehicles, with their armorial bearings, he placed the carcases of the dogs. Six royal carriages opened the procession, behind the glistening window-panes of which could be seen, piled up in wild disorder, the tails, legs, and heads of the victims of the Place Royale.

After this Republican demonstration it was impossible ever again to use the carriages of the nobility, and decent coaches therefore were scarce on the day of the consuls' entry into the Tuileries.

With this event the Revolution ended. Bona-

parte laid his victorious sword across the yawning, sanguinary abyss which had drunk up indifferently the blood of aristocrats and democrats; and he converted this weapon into a bridge, over which the nation passed from the Republic into the Empire.

When Napoleon, on the morning after their removal to the Tuileries, walked with Josephine and Hortense through the Gallery of Diana to inspect the statues he had ordered to be placed there, he stopped before the bust of the younger Brutus, close to which stood a statuette of Cæsar. He gazed for a long time thoughtfully on these two solemn, earnest forms. Then, as if awaking from a dream, he proudly raised his head, and placing his hand upon Josephine's shoulder, said in an energetic tone,—

"It is not enough to be in the Tuileries, a man must also understand how to remain there! How many have already dwelt within these walls! Yea, even highwaymen and Conventionalists. Did I not see with mine own eyes how the wild Jacobins and the cohorts of the *sansculottes* besieged good King Louis and carried him off a prisoner? But do not fear, Josephine, they may come again, if they dare!"

While Bonaparte stood thus and uttered these words before the statues of Brutus and Julius Cæsar, his voice echoed like rolling thunder through the long gallery, making, one might almost imagine, the forms of the heroes of the ancient republics tremble again on their pedestals.

Napoleon raised his arm menacingly towards the bust of Brutus, as if he meant to challenge in this

stern Republican, who murdered Cæsar, Republican France, to whom he intended to become a Cæsar and an Augustus at the same time.

The Revolution was at an end. Bonaparte, with his wife and children, were in the Tuileries. The son and the daughter of that General Beauharnois whom the Republic had murdered had found a second father, who was destined to avenge this crime on the Republic itself.

The Revolution was assuredly at an end.

CHAPTER IX.

A FIRST LOVE.

When the Revolution was ended, and Bonaparte had taken possession of the Tuileries, a time of merry-making and rejoicing followed. Josephine and Hortense were the nucleus of these festivities, the two fairies that animated them, and gave them splendour and significance.

Hortense was passionately fond of dancing, and none of the ladies of Josephine's court equalled her in gracefulness and taste. People, as we see, already spoke of the "court" of Madame Bonaparte. Was she not the wife of the First Consul of France, giving audiences, and possessing, as well as Hortense, a suite, who approached her with the same humility as if she had been a princess of the blood?

Madame Bonaparte now drove in a carriage, drawn by six horses, through the streets of Paris, and was surrounded by a detachment of cavalry. Whereso-ever the people caught sight of her or of Hortense, they hailed them enthusiastically. The consul's coachman and servants had assumed a livery, their great-coats being richly embroidered with gold and aiguillettes. The First Consul had his chamberlains and footmen, his outriders and grooms. Splendid soirées and dinners were given, and foreign ambas-sadors were received in solemn audience; for by this time all the European powers had recognized the Re-public under the Consulate; and as Napoleon had now made peace with England and Austria, both these countries sent representatives to the court of the mighty First Consul.

War with foreign foes was over. But a contest maintained within the very walls of the Tuileries still raged fiercely, that of etiquette and taste. Whether or not hair-powder should be worn, the great ques-tion of fashion that filled every drawing-room, was finally settled by Josephine saying that "people might come to court as they liked, provided they consulted good taste in the choice of their toilette."

For some time past, however, Hortense had taken a less lively part than usual in the fêtes and amuse-ments. She no longer seemed to derive great grati-fication from the festivities of the court, but preferred retirement and seclusion in her own apartments. The soft melancholy notes of her harp apparently

charmed her more than the witty and polite conversation in her mother's salons.

Hortense sought solitude, because there alone could she open her heart, and whisper with all the innocence and fervour, all the energy and self-denial of her unsullied heart, the secret of a first love. How delightful did these hours of wakeful dreaming appear to her! The future presented itself to her eye as one long and glorious summer day, that was just dawning, and whose sun she shortly expected to rise.

Hortense's choice had the secret sanction of her mother and Bonaparte, but both pretended to know nothing of the attachment she had formed. The object of her choice was General Duroc, the first aide-de-camp of her step-father. Josephine however considered her daughter's love not very deep-rooted; she mistook it for the playful, capricious liking of a child; but Napoleon saw more clearly, and seriously thought of uniting the young couple. For that purpose it was necessary to raise Duroc to a higher rank. This young officer accordingly received the post of an ambassador, and was sent to St Petersburg, where Alexander I. had just ascended the throne of his fathers, to congratulate the new Emperor on the part of the First Consul.

The lovers, constantly watched, and ever under the eye of the now dominant etiquette, did not even enjoy the melancholy consolation of bidding each other farewell, of a last unnoticed pressure of the hand, or of vowing once more eternal love and

fidelity, when the hour of parting arrived. But they reposed faith in the future, looking forward to Duroc's return, and the accomplishment of their dearest wish at a more propitious period. Bonaparte had hinted to Duroc that he might yet obtain the prize of Hortense's hand. Until this joyful day arrived, the lovers were compelled to content themselves with the consolation of all separated lovers, with writing letters, which reached their address by the aid of a man of discretion, Monsieur de Bourrienne, Bonaparte's private secretary.

"I used to play with Mademoiselle Hortense almost every morning," says Bourrienne, in his *Mémoires*, "a game at billiards, for which she had a particular liking. Whenever I said, in a whisper, 'I have a letter for you,' the game immediately ceased, she hastened to her room, and I followed to give her the letter. Her eyes were frequently filled with tears of joy and emotion, and not until a considerable time had elasped would she return to the billiard-room, whither I had preceded her."

Thus dreaming of future happiness, Hortense was indifferent to almost everything that passed around her. She little thought that she was to be made the instrument of domestic and political intrigues which should end in crushing her young heart.

Bonaparte's brothers, envious and jealous of the influence the First Consul's wife continued to exercise over her husband, as in the early days of their union, wished to separate Hortense from her mother, considering her one of the most important mainstays of

Josephine's power. By thus isolating the latter, they thought they would be able to acquire a greater influence over their brother. They well knew how strongly he was attached to the children of his wife, and had not yet forgotten a certain occasion, on which they alone had prevented a separation between Bonaparte and Josephine.

On his return from Egypt, the consul's jealousy had been roused by his brothers and Junot, who had artfully insinuated that Josephine had not, during his absence, been altogether faithful. Although he still loved her passionately, Bonaparte had almost made up his mind to separate from his wife, when Bourrienne succeeded in persuading him at least to hear Josephine before he condemned her. This saved her. Bonaparte replied to his secretary's intercession,—

"It is impossible to forgive her! I forgive her! If I do so I will tear my heart out of my breast and cast it into the fire!" and as he thus spoke, in a voice trembling with passion, he seized his breast with his hands, as if about to rend it asunder. On the morning, however, after this conversation, when Napoleon entered his study, he smilingly, and in some embarrassment, approached Bourrienne, and said,—

"Well, you will be satisfied with me, she is here. But you must not suppose that I have forgiven her! Indeed I have not. On the contrary, I am very angry with her, and sent her away. But when she left me in tears I went after her; and as she walked sobbing down the stairs I saw Eugène and Hortense,

who stood weeping at the foot of the staircase. I had not the heart to see tears flow and remain unmoved. Eugène accompanied me to Egypt; I have accustomed myself to look upon him as my adopted son, and he is such a brave, such a noble-minded young man! Hortense is just about to come out in the world, and every one that knows her is full of her praise. I confess, Bourrienne, that the sight of these children moved me deeply. I became sad myself in seeing them weep, and I said to myself, Shall they suffer for the guilt of their mother? I called Eugène back, Hortense followed him with Josephine; could I prevent it? It is impossible for man to be mortal and not have his weak moments."

"Depend upon it, General," replied Bourrienne, "that your adopted children will show themselves grateful for your kindness."

"I hope they will, I hope they will, for they cost me a great sacrifice."

Josephine was soon afterwards enabled to prove her entire innocence, and Bonaparte was thus rewarded for his generosity by learning that the accusations of his jealous brothers were entirely unfounded.

Under these circumstances, Napoleon's brothers were naturally anxious to place Hortense at a distance from her mother, to whom, gifted as she was with so superior a mind, so much tact, and such an acute and sober understanding, she was a perfect Mentor. Josephine, vain and extravagant as she was, would, in spite of her loveliness, have been no

very formidable antagonist if once deprived of the support of her daughter.

Hortense once got out of the way, it would have been comparatively easy to discard Josephine, for that had been determined upon. She was an obstacle and hindrance in the ambitious career of Napoleon's brothers. They well knew they could not ascend to the greatness they coveted through themselves, Napoleon alone, as they were fully conscious, being capable of covering their brows with a crown. It was therefore necessary that he himself should wear the proud symbol of royalty. Josephine, however, was averse to this project. Loving her husband disinterestedly enough to fear the dangers attending such an of usurpation, she possessed too little ambition not to prefer her present peaceful station to the more exalted but more perilous seat on a throne.

It was necessary, therefore, that she should be removed. Bonaparte must choose another wife, in whose veins the blood of legitimate royalty flowed, and who on that account should not object to her husband wearing the purple.

CHAPTER X.

LOUIS BONAPARTE AND DUROC.

THE first thing Bonaparte's brothers busied themselves with was the removal of Hortense. They represented to Bonaparte how passionately she and Duroc loved each other, how they used to keep up an intimate correspondence, and proposed to send Duroc to Italy, where he might hold a higher rank than that which he occupied at present, and thus be in a station to receive Hortense's hand. But secrecy, utter secrecy, was to be observed in the carrying out of this plan, and Josephine must remain ignorant of their intrigues. They, therefore, persuaded Napoleon (who in little things was easily deceived, because his mind was occupied with great ones) to keep the projected marriage secret, so as agreeably to surprise both the young couple and his wife.

But Josephine for once had seen through the intrigues of her hostile brothers-in-law. She was conscious that her whole future, her very existence, depended entirely on the possibility of her acquiring friends and allies amongst her husband's family.

There was but one of the family who was not hostile to her, who, on the contrary, loved and esteemed her, because she was the wife of a dearly beloved brother, and this was Louis, the most amiable of Napoleon's brothers. Louis was of a quiet,

quiet, contemplative disposition, more a scholar than a soldier, and better fitted for the study than for the council-hall or the camp. But in this shy, modest, almost effeminate form lurked an energy and a courage that never failed to make their appearance in the hour of danger and decision, and which neither entreaties nor threats were able to vanquish. His outward appearance was somewhat ungraceful, even awkward, but he could assume dignity when called upon to play a prominent part; and his large blue eyes, more accustomed to look within than without, would, in such circumstances, be lit up with a flash of high resolve.

His was one of those sterling but apparently insignificant characters that are rarely understood and valued, because in the bustle of life people have no leisure to examine them carefully. A mother or a sister is alone capable of appreciating men like these, for long-continued intimacy and close observation enable them to see the bud of this sensitive plant expand, which in contact with a rough world shuts itself up. Such men will seldom find a woman to love them; for they are too shy to seek her, and appear too insignificant to be sought after.

This brother of her husband, who was scarcely four-and-twenty years of age, seemed to Josephine the best suited to become her ally of all the members of her husband's family.

Louis, next to her Napoleon, was the best-beloved child of Madame Lætitia, and the spoiled favourite of all his brothers, who had nothing to fear either from

his ambition or his egotism. He never crossed their plans or mixed in their affairs ; he asked for nothing in return but to be allowed the same liberty, and be left to follow his favourite pursuits. He was the confidant of his sisters, who always found in him a wise counsellor, who never betrayed their secrets. He was particularly liked by Napoleon, who esteemed him on account of his noble qualities, and because he was never importuned by him as he was by his other brothers ; for the ambition and avarice of Jérôme, Joseph, and Lucien were sources of continual vexation to him.

"On hearing my brothers, and the impudence with which they daily demand new sums, it might really be supposed that I had spent their patrimony," Napoleon said one day to Bourrienne, after a spirited scene he had had with Jérôme, which as usual had ended with the latter receiving a fresh order on the private funds of the First Consul.

Jérôme, the youngest of Napoleon's brothers, was also the most reckless : and we take from the first volume of his recently-published Memoirs a characteristic anecdote.

Jérôme was at the age of fifteen the spoiled child of the First Consul, whose paternal surveillance was more than once routed by his ardent and determined nature.

One day the young student escaped from the Tuileries and took a walk on the Boulevards. He selected the best-looking shop for toilet articles, and walked in to inspect them. Not finding anything

handsome enough to his taste, he asked to be shown the best things they had, in an artistic as well as a costly sense. The tradesman, astonished at the lad's coolness, hesitated ere showing him a dressing-case that cost 16,000 francs.

"That will do," said Jérôme; "send it to the Tuileries, and the First Consul's aide-de-camp will pay."

He went out, and the case was really sent to the Tuileries. Duroc, supposing that General Bonaparte had purchased the article, paid for it, and entered the amount on the list of payments he daily laid before the First Consul. The latter, in amazement, asked what it meant? Duroc related what had happened. The tradesman was sent for, and all was explained. At dinner-time Bonaparte entered the room, where everybody was waiting. Taking Jérôme by the ears, he said to him,—

"So it is you, sir, who think proper to buy a dressing-case at 16,000 francs?"

"Ah! yes!" the lad answered, without the slightest embarrassment, "that is my way. I only like handsome things."

Mademoiselle de Cochelet is responsible for another capital anecdote about this young Prince.

Jérôme happened one day to have an absolute necessity for twenty-five louis, for his purse was completely empty, although General Murat, the Governor of Paris, who was most deeply attached to him, frequently helped him with his. But this time such a resource entirely failed, and the quarter's *pension* he

received from the Emperor had been spent in advance. What was to be done ? to whom should he apply ? To his other brothers ? They were absent—Joseph and Louis were with their regiments, and Lucien was ambassador at Lisbon or Madrid. As for his mother, she would not listen to reason in the matter of money to be given to a young scapegrace whom she dearly loved, but to whom she was more prodigal of her lectures than of her money. The idea occurred to him of paying a visit to his uncle, Cardinal Fesch. He went to him, and was most kindly received, and as there was a large dinner-party that day, he was invited to stay. When dinner was over, the guests proceeded to the drawing-room, to drink their coffee. At this moment Jérôme saw the Cardinal go into an adjoining room; he followed, and drawing into a window this beloved uncle, whom he had frequently cajoled, he made his request, but met with a point-blank refusal.

The Cardinal, as everybody knows, was a great admirer of pictures, and the room in which he then was formed the commencement of his splendid gallery. On hearing this positive refusal, Jérôme suddenly turned round—

"There is an old rogue," he said, "who seems to be laughing at the affront I have just endured! I must avenge myself."

At the same time he drew his sabre, pointed it at the face of a noble old man, painted by Vandyke, and was apparently about to dig out his eyes. We can imagine in what a state the Cardinal was on seeing a

chef-d'œuvre on the point of being transfixed; he tried to take the young man by the arm, but he would not listen to reason till the twenty-five louis were paid him. The uncle capitulated, peace was made, and they embraced. The joke was considered excellent, and the First Consul, when told of it a few days later, was greatly amused at it.

Now Louis never asked for money. He was always satisfied with what Bonaparte gave him of his own accord, and his brother had never to pay any debts for him, or any disputes to settle for him with his tradesmen.

This last circumstance inspired Josephine with a feeling approaching to awe for her young brother-in-law. He was such a good manager, he never had any debts! Now she never could avoid contracting them, for economy was a quality unknown to her. How often and how disagreeably had these debts already embarrassed her; how frequently had they already drawn upon her the blame and displeasure of her husband; how repeatedly had she promised never to buy again without being able to pay! Yet debts she contracted, again and again. Josephine was of a generous, rather careless, disposition; she was unable to check herself in this one point, and however much she feared Napoleon's angry looks or words, they were unable to restrain her from prodigality, the penitent sinner ever relapsing into fresh sin.

Louis, with his economical disposition, appeared to be a fit husband for the prudent, deliberate Hortense. Josephine thought they would live very happily

together, and manage their hearts as cleverly as they did their purses. She therefore resolved to make Louis Bonaparte her son-in-law, hoping at the same time that he would be a proper ally to uphold her influence in the family of his brother. Josephine had already a painful presentiment of her unhappy future; she would fancy the Imperial Eagle that soared above her head an evil omen, and believed she could hear awful lamenting voices in the stillness of the night.

The negress at Martinique, it is true, had said that she was to be "even more than a queen," but another fortune-teller, whom she had consulted at Paris (the celebrated Madame Villeneuve), had told her that, although she was destined to wear a crown, she "would wear it for a little while only."

For a little while only? Why? She was too young, too happy to believe that death could be at hand. What then could the prophecy mean? The danger that threatened her must be a divorce. She had borne Napoleon no children, and yet he would have liked so much to have a son! His brothers told him daily it was a political necessity that he should have an heir.

Josephine dared not think further on the subject; she trembled for her future, and looked anxiously around her to find a support that might prevent her fall. With the selfishness of grief she demanded of her daughter that she should sacrifice her dream of happiness to the real welfare of her mother.

And yet Hortense loved. Her young heart revolted at the thought of forsaking the object of her affec-

tion to marry a man to whom she felt no attachment, and who himself had never paid the slightest attention to her. She considered it almost impossible that any one should seriously expect her to give up her pure and passionate love in obedience to cold calculation, to further a family intrigue. She vowed to herself that she would die rather than forsake her lover.

"But Duroc has no fortune or prospects to offer you, my child," Josephine objected; "all he is, he is through Bonaparte. He has no rank, no name. If Napoleon were to cease interesting himself for him, he must sink back into insignificance and obscurity."

Hortense answered, smiling through her tears, "that she loved him, and knew no other ambition than that of being his wife."

"But he! Do you think he too knows no other ambition than that of being your husband? Do you believe he loves you for the sake of your own self?"

"I know he does!" the maiden replied, with sparkling eyes. "Duroc has told me so many times; he loves me, and only me. He has vowed to love me eternally. We two ask for nothing better than to be allowed to belong to each other."

Josephine shrugged her shoulders almost pitifully, as she answered,—

"But I know that Duroc only wishes to marry you because he is ambitious, and thinks that Napoleon

will promote him the more rapidly for being your husband."

"That is a base calumny! It is impossible that it should be so," replied Hortense, with a flush of anger on her cheek. "Duroc loves me, and his noble soul is incapable of selfish calculation."

"Suppose I could prove to you the contrary!" Josephine persisted, exasperated by the resistance of her daughter, and rendered cruel by her fears for her own happiness.

Hortense turned pale, and her enthusiastic, glorious confidence was changed into sickly apprehension.

"If this be in thy power, mother," she said, in a scarcely audible voice, "if Duroc really loves me only as an instrument of his ambition—then I am ready to forget him and marry whomsoever you like."

Josephine triumphed.

"To-day," she said, "Duroc returns from his journey; within three days I shall have proved to you that he does not love you, but merely wishes to be related to Bonaparte."

Hortense heard nothing but the first words of her mother's reply, "To-day Duroc returns." What did she care for the rest? She was to see him again, to derive new confidence and faith from a glance at his handsome, manly face. But she required no strengthening of her faith in him, for she believed in him. How could she suffer the slightest distrust to

arise in her mind and disturb the blessed happiness of their meeting?

Josephine's beautiful hands meanwhile were busily engaged in drawing more closely together the net of her intrigue. She required an ally from amongst her husband's family to maintain herself in her position, and hence Louis must become Hortense's husband.

Bonaparte himself was opposed to a union of his brother with his step-daughter, and was firmly resolved to give Hortense to Duroc. But Josephine understood how to shake his resolution. She wept and implored, caressed and pouted, until he promised her that, if what she said was true, if Duroc only wanted to marry Hortense because he considered the match an advantageous one, he would not object to the marriage of the girl with his brother. However, he first meant to test his aide-de-camp.

Shortly after his conversation with Josephine, Napoleon returned to his study, where Bourrienne, as usual, was sitting at the writing-table.

"Where is Duroc?" the First Consul asked abruptly.

"He is gone out. I believe he is at the Opera."

"As soon as he returns, tell him that, in accordance with my promise, he can marry Hortense. But it must be done within two days. I will give my step-daughter a dowry of 500,000 francs. I nominate Duroc commander of the 8th division, but the day after his wedding he must go with his wife to Toulon, and we shall always live separated. I should not like

to have a son-in-law in my house. As I wish to bring this affair to a close, once for all, you will let me know this very night whether or not Duroc accepts my conditions."

"I don't think he will, General."

"Very good. In that case, Hortense will marry my brother Louis."

"But will she consent to do so?"

"She will be obliged to consent, Bourrienne."

Late in the evening Duroc returned, and Bourrienne communicated to him, word for word, the ultimatum of the First Consul.

Duroc listened attentively, and without interrupting the speaker, but his face became more and more overcast as the secretary delivered the last words of his message.

"If such be the case," he replied, when Bourrienne had finished, "if Bonaparte can do no more for his son-in-law, I shall be obliged to renounce the idea of marrying Hortense. It will grieve me deeply to be obliged to do so, but I will not go to Toulon. I want to remain in Paris."

And without the slightest emotion or sign of grief, Duroc took his hat and left the room.

The same evening Josephine received her husband's consent to the union between her daughter and Louis Bonaparte.

The same evening, too, Josephine informed Hortense that Duroc had failed to stand the test, that he had renounced her through ambitious motives, just as he had loved her through a selfish one.

Hortense looked fixedly at her mother. Not a tear was in her eye, no word of complaint passed her lips, she felt no other consciousness than that of the lightning flash which had struck her to the heart, and destroyed her love, her hope, her happiness eternally.

But she had no longer the courage and energy to flee from the fate that threatened her, and she quietly submitted. As love itself had betrayed her, she no longer cared what shape her future assumed. She knew that happiness was irrevocably lost; for he, the only man she had ever loved, had deceived her, and life's perfume was crushed under-foot for ever.

The next morning Hortense composedly, even smilingly, entered Josephine's room, and declared her willingness to fulfil her mother's wishes. She no longer objected to marry Louis Bonaparte.

Josephine joyfully embraced her daughter. She little thought what a night of agony, what a night of prayer and despair, Hortense had passed. She little suspected that her daughter's seeming composure was nothing but the despairing resignation of a broken heart.

Hortense smiled, for Duroc must not see how she suffered. Her love for him was dead, but the pride of a betrayed woman still lived within her. It was this feeling that wiped away her tears, and summoned up a smile to her pale lip.

Josephine had gained her object. A brother of Bonaparte thus became her son-in-law. There was only one doubt left. Would this son-in-law protect her against her husband's two remaining brothers?

CHAPTER XI.

CONSUL OR KING?

Two days only elapsed between the engagement and the marriage of the young couple. On the 7th of January, 1802, Hortense became the wife of Louis Bonaparte. Napoleon, who himself had preferred a civil ceremony, and had never given his marriage with Josephine the consecration of the Church, wished that his brother and Hortense should be united by a more sacred tie. And never did marriage more require the blessing of Heaven! Perhaps Napoleon thought that the consciousness of an irrevocable union would stimulate the newly-married pair to an honourable and conscientious endeavour to inspire a mutual affection; or it might be that he merely intended to remove every possibility of a divorce. Whatever may have been his motive, the Cardinal Caprera, after the civil contract had been signed, was summoned to the Tuileries to bestow the blessing of the Church on the young couple.

Not a word, not a look, was exchanged between husband and wife. Silently they entered the carriage which was to take them to their home. They were to reside in the same small house, in the Rue de la Victoire, which during the first weeks of their union had served Bonaparte and Josephine as a domicile.

At that time a happy pair had crossed its thres-

hold, but the couple that now took possession of it brought no love or happiness with them. Josephine had entered it with a face radiant with joy, Hortense's cheek was pale, and in her eye a tear trembled.

Louis, too, had been adverse to the marriage. He did not love his wife. They both disliked each other. Hortense could never forgive him for having accepted her hand, knowing, as he did, that her heart belonged to another; and Louis thought she had acted wrongly in consenting to become his wife, although he had never told her that he loved her.

They had both obeyed that iron will which laid down laws, not only for France, but for the family. Both had married from obedience, not from love, and the consciousness of this compulsion stood between the two proud, independent characters as an insurmountable barrier.

They did not attempt even to like each other, nor did they endeavour to find in their hearts that happiness which they were not allowed to seek elsewhere. Brilliantly attired, but pale and melancholy, Hortense appeared at the festivities that took place in honour of her marriage. With a gloomy countenance Louis received the congratulations of friends and courtiers. While every one seemed to be joyous, while singing and dancing, laughing and merry-making, were kept up, the young couple alone were sad and taciturn. Louis avoided speaking to his wife, and she turned from him, that he might not see the cold indifference imprinted on her face.

However, they were both compelled to accept their fate. They were chained to each other, and must try at least to endure life together. Hortense, although apparently gentle, flexible, and maidenly, had yet a stout and energetic heart. She was too proud to allow any one to pity her; she only wept when alone, and forced herself to smile whenever she entered society—for Duroc must not see the traces of tears on her cheek.

But although Hortense had banished love from her heart, the wound caused by the effort remained. Though she no longer hoped to be happy, her youth and her womanly self-esteem revolted at the idea of being henceforth nothing but a slave. She said to herself, "It must be possible to live happily without being happy. I will try it."

She did try. She laughed again and danced, she attended the festivities that took place at St Cloud, at Malmaison, and in the Tuileries, festivities which seemed be the swan's song of the dying Republic—or the cradle-song of the new-born monarchy—which you will.

The day was fast approaching when the French nation would have to choose between a sham republic and a real monarchy. France had ceased already to be a Republic in reality. Monarchy, it is true, was as yet nothing more than a newly-born, naked infant, but all that was wanting was a bold hand, possessing sufficient courage to clothe it with the purple, and the infant would then become a strong, powerful man.

Bonaparte had the courage to do so. He had the still greater courage to do it slowly and with deliberation. He allowed the infant "Monarchy," that lay naked and helpless at his feet, to remain concealed for some time longer; and to keep it from perishing of cold he covered it with the cloak of a "life-consulate." Beneath this mantle the child might rest warm, and slumber for a few weeks until its purple swaddling-clothes were ready.

Bonaparte, by the will of the nation, had become consul for life. Like General Monk, he stood at the foot of the throne, and he had the alternative of restoring it to an exiled king, or of ascending it himself. Napoleon's brothers wished the latter, Josephine prayed that the contrary might take place. She was too much a loving wife to nourish hopes of headlong ambition, too anxious to secure her domestic happiness to be willing to risk it. If Bonaparte were to place a crown on his head, as a natural consequence he would begin to think of becoming the founder of a new dynasty, and with the view of strengthening his throne, would wish to have a son. But Josephine had given him no children, and she knew that Jérôme and Lucien had already more than once proposed to their brother a dissolution of his barren marriage. To her, therefore, Napoleon's coronation signified—divorce.

She loved her husband too selfishly to be willing to sacrifice her happiness to his greatness. Besides, at the bottom of her heart she was a Royalist, and called the Count de Lille, who had found an asylum at Hartwell, the legitimate King of France.

The letters which the Count de Lille (afterwards Louis XVIII.) had written to Bonaparte deeply affected her. She besought her husband to reply kindly and in a conciliatory manner to the unfortunate brother of the beheaded king ; she even ventured to beg that he would do what Louis demanded from him, and restore to the exile the throne of his fathers. Napoleon regarded her proposals as a jest, considering it impossible that any one should expect him to lay down his laurels at the foot of a throne which was to be occupied by a Bourbon instead of himself.

Louis had written to Bonaparte as follows:

"I cannot believe that the hero of Lodi, Castiglione, and Arcola, that the conqueror of Italy and Egypt, should not prefer real glory to vain celebrity. But by hesitation you lose precious time. We might now secure the greatness of France. I say *we*, because I require a Bonaparte to do it, and because he would be incapable of accomplishing it without me."

Bonaparte was of opinion that he might put "I" instead of "we;" he felt himself quite equal to the task of securing the greatness of France, and therefore returned the following answer:

"You cannot wish to return to France, since you would be obliged to pass over the dead bodies of a hundred thousand Frenchmen. Sacrifice your interest to the peace and welfare of your country. History will know how to appreciate it."

Louis, in his letter to Napoleon, had said: "You

are at liberty to choose your post and that of your friends." Napoleon made use of the permission, but unfortunately he selected the post the Count de Lille had meant to reserve for himself.

Josephine, we repeat, would have been glad to see the King return to France, if by his restoration she could retain her husband. She desired no crown, being admired and honoured enough without it. Bourrienne one day said to her:

"You will hardly be able to avoid becoming a queen or an empress."

When Josephine heard these words she wept, and said:

"But I have no ambition to be a queen. If I can always be the wife of Bonaparte, the First Consul, I am perfectly satisfied. Tell him that, Bourrienne; beseech him not to make himself a king."

Nor did Josephine stop here. She herself had the courage to try and dissuade her husband from his ambitious plan.

One day, when Bonaparte had shown himself particularly good-humoured at breakfast, she entered his study, without having announced her coming, and noiselessly approaching him from behind, put her arm round his neck, and then sat down on his knee. She looked full into his pale face, and affectionately stroking his hair, said:

"I implore you, Bonaparte, do not make yourself a king. I know your wicked brother Lucien would fain persuade you to it, but do not listen to him."

Bonaparte laughed. "You see ghosts where there

are none, my poor Josephine. Your old widows from the Faubourg St Germain, and before all your La Rochefoucauld, have told you these fables. But they annoy me, so do not trouble me with them again."

Bonaparte, who had answered his wife's advice with an evasive jest, now began to speak seriously to his confidential councillors on the subject of placing a crown on his head. In the course of a conversation on this matter, Bourrienne said to him:

"As First Consul you are the most celebrated man in Europe; but if you ascend a throne, you will be the youngest king, and rank behind every one of them."

Bonaparte's eyes glistened as he heard this reply, and with that peculiar expression which was called to his features in the moment of important decision, he answered:

"The youngest king!—well, then, I will drive all the princes from their thrones, and then I must surely be recognized as the oldest!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE CALUMNY.

Hortense's marriage with Bonaparte's brother did not produce the results for which Josephine had hoped. She had made a bad choice; for Louis, of all

the First Consul's brothers, was the least desirous to interfere in politics or intrigues. Moreover, he no longer felt the same friendship as before for Josephine. His open and honest heart accused her of having acted basely and selfishly in sacrificing her daughter's happiness to her own interests. He was angry with her for having obliged him to marry without love, and although he did not, as yet, place himself in the ranks of her enemies, he had already ceased to be her friend.

The life led by the newly-married couple was a strange and unusual one. They openly confessed to each other their mutual dislike, acknowledging that force only had united them. In this strange open-heartedness they went so far as to pity each other as friends, on account of the misery they experienced as man and wife. They repeatedly expressed their conviction that they should never be able to love; but their compassion for each other gradually became so intense that it might have been easily converted into affection.

Already would Louis sit for hours with his wife, endeavouring to amuse her by a witty conversation; and Hortense began to consider it her most sacred, her sweetest duty to make her husband forget, by kindly showing him all possible attention, how miserable he was at her side. They both hoped that the child they expected would indemnify them for an unhappy union and the freedom they had lost.

"If I should give you a son," Hortense said with a smile, "when he first addressed you by the sweet

title of father you would perhaps forgive me for being his mother."

"And in pressing that son to your heart, in feeling how dearly you love him, you might forget that it is I who am his father. You will at least cease to hate me, for I shall be the father of your beloved child."

Very probably, if the young people had been left to themselves they would have learned to understand each other—would have overcome the misfortune of their position—and hatred would have been changed into love. But the world treated them cruelly, crushing with a merciless hand the germ of affection that had begun to develope itself in Hortense's heart.

Josephine had married her daughter to her brother-in-law in order to retain her by her side. Her enemies knew this, and therefore made Hortense the object of incessant attacks and malicious calumnies. Their desire was to separate the daughter from her mother. As it had been found impossible to effect the desired result by a marriage, they had now determined to try whether calumny would not serve their turn.

A rumour was accordingly set afloat that Bonaparte had married Hortense to his brother, only because he himself loved her, and had been jealous of Duroc. Many pushed this abominable calumny so far as to insinuate that the child Hortense bore under her heart was more closely related to Napoleon than it would be as the offspring of his brother.

This was an infamous calumny, but it was one the aim of which was well calculated. These slanderers well knew how much Napoleon hated even the rumour of such things, and how offensive therefore, strict as he was in his principles, it must be to him to find himself the object of such suspicions.

They thought that, in order to silence such rumours, he would at once remove Louis and Hortense from Paris. Then, Josephine being left alone, it would be more easy to deprive her of her influence, and to separate Napoleon from the guardian angel who said to him, "Do not make yourself a king! Be satisfied with being the greatest man of your age! Do not place a crown on your head!"

In Paris these calumnies were only whispered, but abroad they were repeated in a more open manner. Bonaparte's enemies seized this opportunity to wound him as a man! As a hero he was proof against all their attacks.

One morning he was reading an English newspaper which had always been hostile to him, and which, as he well knew, was the organ of the Count of Artois, who lived at Hartwell. All at once an angry cloud covered his forehead. With an indignant gesture he crumpled the paper in his hand. Then his face brightened again, and a proud smile appeared on it. He rose, ordered the master of the ceremonies to wait on him, and commanded the issue of the necessary invitations for a ball which was to take place the next day at St Cloud. He

then went to Josephine, informed her of the arrangements he had just made, and told her that she must prevail on Hortense to appear on the occasion, however indisposed she might be.

Hortense was too much accustomed implicitly to obey the commands of her step-father to attempt any opposition. She rose from her *chaise longue*, where, for some weeks past, she had been in the habit of resting, and commanded her ladies to dress her for the ball. She felt ill and uneasy in her gorgeous attire, which so little suited her frame of mind and her figure, but the kind yielding woman dared not even complain, great as was the constraint her step-father's order imposed on her.

At the appointed hour she was in the ball-room at St Cloud; Bonaparte came to meet her with a courteous smile, but instead of thanking her for having appeared at all, he at once asked her to dance.

Hortense, in great astonishment, looked up in his face. She knew that Napoleon, generally speaking, disliked the sight of an *enceinte* woman. He had often remarked that he thought it excessively offensive to the eye, and indecent to see a woman dance when in such a condition, and now he himself asked *her* to do so!

Hortense therefore refused to comply with the First Consul's wish, and he became more and more pressing in his demand.

"You know how much I like to see you dance, Hortense," he said, with the most engaging smile;

"do just dance for once, I should consider it a particular favour, if it only be a quadrille."

And Hortense, although with reluctance, and deeply blushing at such an exposure, obeyed her step-father.

This scene took place at night. How great therefore was Hortense's astonishment to read in the next morning's newspaper a piece of poetry, which applauded in the most flattering terms her amiability for having danced a quadrille, in spite of her expectation of being confined within a few weeks.

Hortense did not feel at all flattered, but, on the contrary, offended by the poet's emphatic lines. She hastened to the Tuileries to complain of them, and to inquire of her mother how it was that the newspaper could print in the morning what had occurred upon the previous night. Bonaparte, who was with Josephine when Hortense entered, and to whom she addressed herself first, only smiled in an evasive manner and at once left the room. Hortense now turned to her mother, who, downcast, and with tears in her eyes, was reclining on a sofa. Josephine knew how matters stood, for Napoleon had told the truth, and her heart was yet too full of grief and resentment to be able to keep the secret.

She told her daughter that Bonaparte had only asked her to dance a quadrille because he had already ordered Monsieur Esmenard to write a panegyric on it, and that the whole ball had simply been arranged in order that she might dance, and the poem relating to her appear in the newspaper.

When Hortense inquired the reason of all these in-

trigues, Josephine had the cruel courage to inform her of the malicious rumour that had been set afloat; telling her that Napoleon had ordered poem, quadrille, and ball, because he had lately read in an English newspaper the calumnious statement that Madame Louis Bonaparte had been delivered of a strong, healthy boy, several weeks previously, and he had been determined to give this article the lie.

Hortense received this new wound with a smile of contempt. She had no word of indignation for such an infamous calumny. She did not weep, did not complain; but as she rose to leave her mother she fainted, and fell heavily to the ground. It took hours before she could be restored to perfect consciousness.

A few weeks afterwards Hortense was delivered of a son. The child was dead born. Thus her last dream of happiness was gone, and there was no longer any hope of a reconciliation between husband and wife.

Hortense rose from her illness with an energetic and resolute heart. During the long lonely days she had passed in bed, she had found leisure to think over many things, and had discovered the intrigues that had been spun around her. She formed a right appreciation of her position. She had been a mother, and although she had not a child, the courage of a mother remained with her. The young dreaming, soft-hearted girl had suddenly become an energetic and strong-minded woman, who was no longer willing patiently to bend her neck under the yoke of misfortune, but

meant to face it boldly. Her fate was sealed, nothing could alter it, but instead of being ruled by it, she now resolved to make it subservient to her own will. Since she was not allowed to be happy through the heart, she determined to be happy through the mind. A peaceful home was refused her, but her house should be a gathering-place for science and genius. Poets and artists, singers and sculptors, should make it a temple of art.

Before long all Paris was talking about the salon of Madame Louis Bonaparte, the festivities that took place there, and the concerts which were given. The most distinguished operatic singers sang melodies composed by Hortense, and Talma, with his full sonorous voice, might be heard reciting the poetry she had written. Every one was ambitious to be invited to these soirées, where the performers and the audience mingled with each other, and where, instead of slandering and criticizing, they enjoyed a liberal conversation, and observed with pleasure the revival of literary and scientific taste.

Hortense seemed to have reconciled herself to life, and to enjoy it. She turned from the disagreeable and repulsive things it contained, shutting her eyes against them or meeting them with cold contempt. She never alluded, by a single word, to the calumny with which her mother had acquainted her, considering it as altogether beneath herself to attempt a vindication of her honour. She felt that there are accusations which are best answered by silence, which a mere reply endows with the advantage of possibility.

The charge which had been infamously hurled against her fell so short, was so far beneath her, that she would have been unable to reach it, even had she condescended to stoop.

Bonaparte, however, still felt hurt by the calumny, the more so because these insulting rumours continued to keep afloat. His enemies diligently endeavoured again and again to revive them, hoping by accusing him of an ignominious crime to tarnish the laurels he had won.

"They still persist in spreading the rumours of a *liaison* between me and Hortense," he said one day to Bourrienne ; "and they have even gone so far as to throw out miserable inuendos about the legitimacy of her child. I first thought the rumour had only found an echo, because the nation wished me to have a child, but I think people still talk about an intimate acquaintance, do they not?"

"They do, General. I confess I never should have thought the calumny could find so much credit."

"It is really abominable," Napoleon replied, with a trembling voice; "you, Bourrienne, know best whether it has any foundation or not. You see and hear everything. Nothing that passes in my house can escape your observation. You were Hortense's confidant in her love-affair with Duroc; I therefore expect that, if you should ever write anything about me, you will cleanse me of this infamous accusation. I do not wish it to follow me to posterity. I reckon on you, Bourrienne, for I know you have never believed in it?"

"Never, General!"

"Well, I count on you. Not only for my own sake, but also on behalf of poor Hortense. She is already unhappy enough, and so is my brother. I am sorry for them, for I love them both. You will remember what I have said when you are writing about me."

"I will remember it, General. I shall speak the truth, only it is unfortunately beyond my power to make every one believe it."

Bourrienne has kept his word. He has spoken the truth. He writes with indignation of the miserable calumny with which, for a long time, Napoleon's enemies tried to brand the Emperor's and Hortense's memory. In his righteous anger he even forgets the moderate and polite language of the diplomatist, which otherwise he uses without exception.

"It is an abominable falsehood," Bourrienne writes, "to assert that Bonaparte had other feelings for Hortense than those of a father. Hortense felt a respectful awe for him. She never spoke to the First Consul without trembling, she never dared to ask him for anything. She would address herself to me, and I was obliged to ask for what she wanted, and it was not until I met with a refusal that I mentioned the name of the petitioner.

"'The stupid little thing!' the First Consul would reply, 'why does she not speak for herself?' Napoleon always felt for her as a father, and, from the first day of her marriage, he loved her as he would have loved his own child. I, who for years have been

the constant witness of his actions and his private life, solemnly declare that I never saw or heard anything that could justify the suspicion of a criminal intimacy. This calumny is one of those which are begotten by envy towards a man who by his own merit raised himself to an exalted station, and which are but too willingly believed by the jealous and malicious. If I had the least doubt in regard to this horrible accusation, I should openly confess it. Bonaparte is dead now. Impartial history shall not, must not, frivolously accuse the father and friend of having been a voluptuous lover. Partial and hostile writers have told the world, without having any proofs for their accusation, that a culpable intimacy existed between Bonaparte and Hortense. It is a lie, a miserable lie! And yet the calumny has for a long time found an echo, not only in France, but throughout Europe. Alas! I am afraid it is but too true that calumny exercises so powerful a spell, that if once mistress of a man she never loses hold of her victim again."

CHAPTER XIII.

KING OR EMPEROR?

JOSEPHINE'S entreaties had proved unavailing. Although, literally speaking, Napoleon had done as she wished, yet he had not taken her advice. "Do

not make yourself a king," she had said. Bonaparte did not make himself a king, but he made himself Emperor. As he was unwilling to pick up the crown which had fallen from the head of the Bourbon, he shaped himself a new diadem, which was offered by the nation and the senate. The people of France still fancied they saw the phantom of Revolution standing behind them; they feared the repetition of a reign of terror, and since the discovery of the plot of Georges, Moreau, and Pichegru, they had anxiously asked each other what would become of France if the malcontents were to succeed in taking Bonaparte's life?

The vessel of the Republic, deprived of its helsman, would once more have been at the mercy of a tempestuous sea. The nation demanded stability and fixed institutions; a monarchical form of government only, a dynasty alone, could offer this guarantee, and it became necessary that the consulate for life should be converted into an hereditary empire. Bonaparte used to say, "A man can be the Emperor of a Republic, but not its King, for the two words are too hostile to each other." It seemed as if many Frenchmen flattered themselves that the Republic would continue to exist even after Napoleon had become Emperor.

On the 18th of May, 1804, the long and carefully prepared plan was carried out. On that day the senate, in a body, proceeded to St Cloud, and begged Bonaparte, in the name of the nation and the army, to

accept the Imperial power, and thus exchange the consular seat for a throne.

Cambacères, who until recently had been Second Consul, stood at the head of the senate, and it was he who had to inform Bonaparte of the wishes of the French nation. He, who, when one of the members of the Convention, had voted for the execution of Louis the Sixteenth, in order that Royalty might be banished from France, was now the first who addressed Bonaparte with the title "Imperial Majesty," and the simple but significant word "sire." The new Emperor showed himself grateful, for the first act of his sovereign power was the nomination of Cambacères to the post of Lord Treasurer and Lord High Chancellor. This deed of nomination was the first document which Bonaparte signed with the simple "Napoleon." The Emperor, however, adhered to the customary Republican style. He addressed Cambacères as "Citizen Consul," and retained the chronology of the Revolution, his letter bearing the date, "28th Floréal of the year 12."

In a second decree, issued like the other on the first day of his Imperial power, the Emperor conferred new dignities on the members of his family. They were all made princes and princesses of France, and received the title of Imperial Highness. In addition, Napoleon's brother Joseph was nominated Elector, and Louis *Connétable*. In his new office, Louis had on the same day to introduce to the Emperor all the general officers of the army,

who were also presented to the "Empress Josephine."

Thus the prophecy of the negress was fulfilled: Josephine was "more than a queen." But in the midst of the splendour and glory of her new station, she remembered with a shrinking heart the words of the Parisian fortune-teller, who had said that "although she should wear a crown, yet it would only be for a little while." She felt that the fabulous good fortune she had experienced could not be enduring, and that the Emperor would be obliged to imitate those kings of antiquity, who had sacrificed the best, the dearest of their possessions to conciliate the demon of envy and revenge. It was she who would fall a victim to the Emperor's ambition and the weal of his dynasty.

Under these circumstances it was but natural that the Empress should be apprehensive and unsettled in mind. Her own greatness inspired her with terror. Trembling she entered into possession of the new dignities and titles that were dealt out to her with a bountiful hand from the cornucopia of fortune. It was with something like shame and fear that she heard herself addressed by the same proud titles which in bygone years she had in these very rooms bestowed on the Queen of France. Then the Marchioness de Beauharnois paid homage to Marie Antoinette. Marie Antoinette had died on a scaffold, and Josephine was now the "majesty" enthroned in the Tuileries, whilst the legitimate King of France

was leading a humble life in some obscure corner of England.

Josephine was still a Royalist. Even as Empress she lamented the fate of the Bourbons, and considered it a sacred duty to advise and assist those who, faithful to their oath and their principles, had followed the royal exiles, or had emigrated to escape the new order of things. Her purse was always open to the emigrants, and her considerable debts, so repeatedly incurred in spite of the enormous sums she received every month, were not altogether the work of her prodigality, but, in great part, the result of her generous liberality. One half of her income was always reserved for assisting emigrants, and however great her embarrassment might sometimes be, however impatient her creditors, she would never suffer this sum to be touched, which was destined to misfortune and fidelity alone.

Josephine was now an Empress, and her daughter, the wife of the Connétable of France, occupied the second place at the brilliant court of the Emperor. The daughter of the beheaded Viscount de Beauharnois had become a princess of France, an "Imperial Highness," was always approached with the deepest respect, and had her ladies of honour. But, alas! her personal freedom and ease had been banished by that tyrannical etiquette which the Emperor thought proper to introduce into his court.

Neither Josephine nor Hortense allowed herself to be dazzled or blinded by the splendour of her new

station. Josephine's influence had not been augmented by the possession of a crown, and Hortense's proud titles were unable to enhance the charms nature had bestowed upon her. She would have been happy in a modest station of life by the side of a beloved husband, but her exalted position could not compensate her for the loss of her dearest hopes.

But fate seemed to take compassion on poor Hortense, on the lovely, innocent being who bore both her greatness and her misfortune with the same smiling dignity, for it afforded her a compensation for the destruction of her first maternal happiness, and new hopes were stirring beneath her heart.

Josephine was delighted with the news, for her daughter's hope was a hope for her. If Hortense were to give birth to a son, the impending blow of which the Empress ever stood in dread might be averted, for through him the dynasty of the Napoleons would be secured, and he might be the heir of the imperial throne. Napoleon might unhesitatingly adopt a child who was at once his nephew and grandson. He had even promised Josephine as much, having told her that he would be satisfied with an adopted son, in whose veins flowed the blood of the Emperor and the Empress, rather than separate from his beloved wife.

Napoleon still loved Josephine. Everything that seemed to him fair and beautiful he compared with her, who, clothed in loveliness, stood by his side, and shed a mild, conciliatory light around his usurped greatness.

When, after he had become Emperor, Napoleon was welcomed with thundering cheers by the people, he turned to his companions, with a face beaming with satisfaction, and said, "What delightful music this is! These acclamations sound as sweet as Josephine's voice. I am proud to be beloved by such a nation."

But Napoleon's ambition was not yet satisfied. He had formerly said, "It is not enough to be in the Tuileries, it is necessary also that a man should know how to remain there." In like manner he was now of opinion that "it was not sufficient to have been elected Emperor by the nation, he must also be anointed by the Pope."

Napoleon was sufficiently powerful already to dictate laws to the world; not only France bowed before him, but foreign sovereigns also.

In conformity with Napoleon's desire to be anointed by His Holiness, the head of the Church left his holy city, and came to Paris to bestow, in the cathedral of Notre Dame, the blessing of the Church on the Emperor.

Thus was a new ray of glory added to Napoleon's diadem. In this solemn consecration he enjoyed a triumph over the world and its prejudices, and over all those princes who reigned "by the grace of God."

The Pope come to crown the Emperor? Why, the German Emperors had been obliged humbly to proceed to Rome to receive the blessing of the Holy Father, but now the Pope set out on a pilgrimage to Paris to anoint the Emperor of the French, to adopt

the offspring of a revolution as the eldest son of the Church!

All France was, so to say, intoxicated with joy. It worshipped the hero, who changed fables into realities, who stood at so exalted an eminence that the holy see of Rome even became the footstool of his greatness! Napoleon's progress through France, on which Josephine accompanied him, resembled *one* triumphal procession. Everywhere the people received him with enthusiastic acclamations, the Church sang her *Sanctus! Sanctus!* and the clergy welcomed him at the portals of the churches with their blessings, saluting him as the saviour of France. Everywhere the imperial couple met with cheers, triumphal arches, and speeches,—the latter being sometimes rather overstrained, and often very ridiculous.

When the Emperor arrived at Arras, the Prefect of that town received him with an enthusiastic address, in the course of which he said, "God created Bonaparte, and then rested!" Count Louis de Narbonne, who stood close by, and who at that time had not yet been gained over to the party of the Emperor, or appointed Grand-Marshal of the Imperial Court, said, pretty distinctly, "God would have done better had He rested a little sooner."

At last all France was electrified by the intelligence that the incredible, that which no one had dared to believe, had come to pass, that Pope Pius VII. had crossed the frontiers and was approaching the capital. The Holy Father was everywhere re-

ceived with the greatest distinction. The Church emerged victoriously from amongst the ruins beneath which the Revolution had buried it for a while. The old royal castle of Fontainebleau had, by order of the Emperor, been fitted up to receive the Pope. They had the tasteful consideration to furnish the bedroom after the model of that of the Holy Father in the Quirinal at Rome. The Emperor and Josephine therefore proceeded to Fontainebleau to welcome Pius VII.

The ceremonial of the reception had been settled beforehand; and all the points of etiquette had been taken into consideration. It had been arranged that on the couriers bringing intelligence of the Pope's approach, the Emperor should go out hunting, and meet the Holy Father, as if by accident, on the road. The imperial carriages and the court had been ordered to the forest of Nemours. Napoleon, in a hunting-dress, followed by a few only of his attendants, rode up a little hill, and at the same moment the carriage of the Pope reached its summit. His Holiness ordered his servants to stop, and the Emperor, with a movement of his hand, commanded his followers to remain behind. There was a deep, solemn silence. Every one of the by-standers was conscious that an important scene of history was being played at that moment. They all looked in mute expectation on the two principal actors,—on the Emperor, who in a simple hunting-dress was sitting on his charger, and on the Pope, who reclined in his glittering carriage drawn by six horses.

When Napoleon had dismounted, the Pope hastened to leave his carriage. As he was on the point of putting his foot on the ground he hesitated for a moment; but there was no time to be lost, Napoleon was already on foot, and Pius stepped out of his carriage, although his gold-embroidered slippers of white satin were ill adapted for the mud of the road, which had been considerably softened by previous rain. The Emperor's hunting-boots were doubtless much fitter for a meeting on the highway than his Holiness's slippers.

The Emperor and the Pope approached and embraced each other. But all at once the horses of an imperial carriage, as if by some neglect on the part of the driver, sprang forward and separated the affectionate couple. As if by accident too Napoleon stood on the right side of the carriage, whilst the Pope was on the other side of the road. At this moment both doors of the imperial equipage were thrown open by the footmen, and Napoleon and Pius VII. entered it simultaneously. They sat side by side, the Emperor in the place of honour, the Pope on his left. Thus the observances of etiquette had been satisfied, and neither of them had had the precedence.

On the 2nd of December, 1804, the solemn coronation of the Imperial couple took place in Notre Dame. Not merely all Paris, but all France was astir on that day. A tremendous crowd thronged the streets of the capital, every window was occupied by richly-dressed ladies, the bells rang joyous

peals, and the sound of martial music mingled with the thunder of the artillery and the loud cheers of the multitude.

For an instant, however, the enthusiastic cheers of the people gave place to a hearty laugh. It was at the moment when the approaching Papal procession was seen to open (according to an old Roman custom) with a she-ass. Whilst the Pope, accompanied by the high dignitaries of the Cathedral, went to Notre Dame, there to await the arrival of the Imperial couple, Napoleon was ornamenting himself with the emblems of sovereign power. He wore a green velvet mantle, studded with diamonds and golden bees, and embroidered with ermine.

When about to leave the Tuileries, and after the Empress, already fully dressed, had joined him, he suddenly ordered that the solicitor, Ragideau, should be fetched without a moment's delay. Messengers were immediately despatched, a court carriage accompanied them, and within a quarter of an hour Monsieur Ragideau stood before the Emperor.

"I have sent for you, sir," Napoleon addressed him, "because I was desirous to ask you whether General Bonaparte really does not possess anything besides his sword and his cloak, or if to-day you will forgive the Viscountess de Beauharnois for having married me?"

Ragideau looked astonished, and Josephine asked what was meant by these mysterious words. Napoleon in reply told them how in the ante-room of the notary he had overheard the conversation in which

Ragideau endeavoured to dissuade Josephine from marrying the General who "possessed nothing save his cloak and his sword."

The solicitor's words then entered Napoleon's ambitious heart like the blade of a dagger, and deeply wounded it. He had never mentioned the circumstance, although he had never forgotten it. At this moment, when arrived at the height of human greatness, he could not deny himself the triumph of reminding the little lawyer of the words he had used when advising Josephine not to marry him on account of his poverty.

The poor General Bonaparte had become a powerful Emperor. Formerly he had nothing but his sword and his cloak, to-day the Pope was waiting for him at Notre Dame to place a crown upon his head.

CHAPTER XIV.

NAPOLEON'S HEIR.

HORTENSE had not been able to perform an active part in the festivities that took place on the occasion of the Emperor's coronation. She had her share however of the general happiness, for she had given birth to a son. The sight of the child inspired the young mother with new hope and energy.

Josephine, who only accepted the Imperial diadem

reluctantly, received the news of her grandson's birth with the greatest joy. She thought that the clouds, which for some time had been gathering over her head, were now dispelled, and that the sun of her good fortune was again shining with undiminished splendour. Hortense, by giving birth to a son, had secured her mother's future; for now that the Emperor was no longer without an heir to his newly-founded dynasty, a divorce would not be necessary.

Napoleon seemed willing to realize Josephine's hopes, and evinced an inclination to adopt his brother's son. He begged the Pope to delay his departure for a few days, in order to baptize the child. The vicar of Christ complied with the Emperor's wishes, and the baptism took place at St Cloud. Napoleon himself held the little prince over the font, Madame Lætitia Bonaparte being the other witness.

Thus Hortense had at last found a being whom she might love with all the passionate affection which hitherto she had been obliged to conceal within her bosom. Little Napoleon Charles was her first happy love, and she enjoyed it with all her soul.

Henceforth her own house was her favourite resort, and she valued it doubly now, because she was no longer obliged to share it with her husband. She considered it a favour of Heaven that she was not compelled to give up to him any part of the love she bore her child. Louis Bonaparte, the Connétable of France, had been appointed governor of Piedmont, and Hortense was indebted to her bad health for per-

mission to remain behind. She did not accompany her husband to Italy, but stayed at her *hôtel* in Paris, which, at the beginning of summer, she exchanged for the castle of St Leu, which had lately been purchased by her husband.

But Hortense was not allowed to enjoy her happy solitude and healthy rustic life for a lengthened period. The Emperor's brother and the lady who was at once Napoleon's sister-in-law and daughter, could not hope to be suffered to live in obscurity. Rays of the sun that dazzled the eyes of the world, their destination was to enhance the brilliancy of the orb from which they derived their lustre.

An order of Napoleon's recalled to Paris the Connétable, who, having returned from Piedmont, had hastened to St Leu to see his son, where Hortense was commanded to join him. The Emperor had prepared a brilliant lot for his brother; the Connétable was about to become a king. Envoys from Holland, now called the Batavian Republic, had arrived in Paris to ask their powerful neighbour, the Emperor Napoleon, to give them a king, who might unite their country to France by the ties of relationship. Napoleon was willing to comply with their wishes, and his brother Louis was selected as their sovereign.

But Louis heard of the proposal with terror, and refused to accept an honour that, far from dazzling him by its brilliance, only filled him with alarm. And for once he acted in harmony with Hortense, who strongly urged him to persist in his refusal; both feeling that the crown which was to be placed on

their heads would be nothing but a golden burden, and that Holland would not be suffered to be more than a dependency of France. Personal reasons besides might be added to these political motives for declining so dangerous an honour.

In Paris both husband and wife might forget the fetters that chained them to each other, for there they were in the midst of their friends and relations. They could avoid meeting. The numerous court and large family of the Emperor stood between the two young people, who could never forgive each other for having consented to their marriage. In Paris they had society, and were immersed in all sorts of amusements and diversions, but in Holland, where they would be left to themselves, they would always hear the rattling of their odious chains. Could they but stay in Paris, they might continue the pilgrimage of life without open hostility, but the quiet life of Holland, by compelling them to live together, must inevitably transform them into actual enemies.

They were both aware of this, and therefore united their efforts in trying to avert the new misfortune which was hovering over their heads in the shape of a crown.

But, alas! whence could they derive the power successfully to resist the will of the Emperor? Hortense had never dared to address herself directly to Napoleon, and Josephine had already begun to feel that her wishes and entreaties no longer possessed their former influence over the Emperor. She therefore carefully avoided asking him for anything, unless

she had the certainty of being successful in her demand.

Louis, however, had sufficient courage to attempt opposition. He openly told his brother that he felt no inclination to accept the proffered crown. But Napoleon's glance of anger prostrated Louis' resolution, and he silently obeyed.

In the presence of the deputies of the Batavian Republic, who had come to ask for a sovereign, Napoleon called on his brother Louis to accept the crown of Holland, and exhorted him to be a good king to his country, and to respect and protect the laws and religion of his subjects.

Louis, in a voice that faltered with emotion, declared his willingness to accept the crown, and then took an oath faithfully to fulfil his duties as a sovereign.

From that moment it was his earnest and constant endeavour to prove himself faithful to his oath. He devoted all his energies and talents to the conscientious discharge of his duty. As the Dutch had chosen him for their king, he wished to show them that he was not unworthy of their confidence. As he had been forced to leave his native country, and to cease being a Frenchman, he determined to direct all his thoughts towards his new fatherland, to enter into the sympathies of the people, and to make himself familiar with their laws and institutions.

The weak and sickly scholar exhibited an energy and activity of which no one could have thought him capable. The contemplative, reserved brother of

Napoleon suddenly assumed the character and aspect of a man, who, conscious of his own dignity, had set himself a great task, and meant to accomplish it through his own unaided efforts.

The King of Holland, considering it of primary importance to be liked by his subjects, neglected nothing which could gain him the hearts of the Dutch nation, and studied their language and manners with indefatigable perseverance. He also endeavoured to discover the sources whence the wealth and the misery of nations springs, in order that he might be able to enlarge the former whilst doing all in his power to diminish the latter.

He was always at work, constantly exerting himself in order to gain the affection and esteem of his subjects.

Hortense also endeavoured to fill her new sphere properly. As she too was compelled to wear a crown, she wished to wear it with dignity. In her drawing-room she assembled the old aristocracy and young nobility of Holland, and taught the stiff and prejudiced society of that country the easy grace and fine tact of the French salons. The arts and sciences made their appearance with the new Queen, and were introduced by her into the houses of the wealthy and great, to which they imparted new lustre and life.

But Hortense was not only a protectress of art and science, she was also the benefactress of the poor, and an angel of consolation to the wretched. She dried the tears and alleviated the sufferings of

many. Both the King and the Queen were adored by the nation; both understood how to spread happiness around them; but they were unable to find it for themselves. Kind and yielding to others, they treated each other with anger and obstinacy. Nothing, not even the birth of a second and a third son, was capable of filling up the gulf that lay between them.

This gulf was destined to be made wider still by another blow dealt to them by ruthless fate. The eldest of Hortense's sons, the adopted child and heir presumptive of Napoleon, with whom the Emperor had been seen playing for hours together on the terrace at St Cloud, and whose birth had first made Hortense acquainted with the blissful feelings of a mother—little Napoleon Charles, suddenly died of the measles.

This was a dreadful blow, prostrating not only the parents, but also the Imperial couple of France. When the sad intelligence reached the Emperor he wept, and Josephine exclaimed in agony:

"Now I am lost! my fate is decided, he will forsake me."

But after this first selfish outbreak of her grief she thought of her poor daughter, and hastened to the Hague to weep with her, and to remove her from the scene of her misfortune.

Hortense, in mute despair, followed her mother to St Cloud, while her husband, whose health was much shaken by the death of the child, went to the water-

ing places of the Pyrenees. The royal castle at the Hague was once more deserted; death had banished mirth and joy from it, and although the King and Queen did after some time return to it, peace and happiness remained absent for ever.

King Louis was gloomier than before, after his return from the Pyrenees. An unnatural distrust of everything and everybody, an odious irritability, had taken possession of his whole character, and his wife was no longer willing to put up with his capriciousness and ill-temper. As husband and wife were totally unlike each other in their wishes, opinions, and inclinations, their children, far from being the means of conciliation, were but the sources of discord; for each of the parents wished to possess them exclusively, in order to educate them according to his or her views.

Unhappy as Hortense was, there was another misfortune that made her forget her own wretchedness, because it seemed greater than hers, as it crushed the happiness of her mother. Josephine, in a letter which was nothing but a deep wail of agony, summoned her daughter to her side, and Hortense, without delay, set out for Paris.

CHAPTER XV.

PRESENTIMENTS.

JOSEPHINE'S evil forebodings, and the words of the fortune-teller, were now about to be fulfilled. The crown which she had accepted with so much reluctance, but which, having once received it, she had worn with so much affability and grace, so much dignity and ease, was about to fall from her head. Napoleon had the courageous cruelty, now that he was great, to forsake the woman who had loved and chosen him when he possessed nothing but doubtful prospects. Josephine, who had shared his poverty, his dangers, and humiliations, was now to be banished from his side. The woman who had risen with him to greatness was to be discarded for ever.

Napoleon had courage sufficient to determine this, but he shrunk from telling Josephine himself what he intended. He was about to sacrifice to his ambition the woman whom he had often called his "guardian angel," but he, who had never trembled on the field of battle, where death surrounded him, trembled at the thought of witnessing her tears, and avoided meeting her reproachful eye.

Josephine, however, was fully conscious of the greatness of the danger that threatened her. She read it in the gloomy, downcast look of the Emperor

(who, since his return from Vienna, had ordered the communication between his rooms and those of the Empress to be closed, without informing her of the fact); she read it in the faces of the courtiers, who began to approach her with less humility, and to substitute for the respect of former days a sort of good-natured compassion; she heard it in the whisper that died away as soon as she approached a distant group in her drawing-room, and in the hints which were thrown out by the journals, which all attached great political importance to the Emperor's visit to Vienna.

Josephine knew that her destiny was about to be fulfilled. She felt that she was too weak to offer any effectual resistance, but she was determined to play her part as woman and empress to the very last with becoming dignity. She displayed no tears, for they were all wept in the stillness of night. She concealed her sigh under a smile, and hid the paleness of her cheek under the rosy hue of paint. But she longed for a sympathetic heart to whom she might reveal her agony. This was the reason why she called Hortense to Paris.

The meeting of mother and daughter was a sad one. Many a tear was shed, as Hortense's ear heard Josephine's tale of woe.

"Oh, if you knew," said Josephine, "what I have suffered during these last weeks, when I had ceased to be his wife, but still had to appear as such! What looks, Hortense, what looks are those which courtiers bestow upon a deserted wife! In what uncertainty,

what continual fear have I lived, expecting every moment that the terrible sentence, the threat of which has for a long time glowed in Napoleon's eye, would be pronounced!"

Hortense heard her mother's complaints in silence, for she felt her own heart contracted by the bitterness of grief. She remembered how she had been obliged to sacrifice her own happiness to that of her mother; how she had been condemned to marry without love, in order that the grandeur of Josephine might be secured; and alas! the sacrifice has been in vain—it has not availed to avert her mother's fate. Here Josephine stood, awaiting the blow that was to prostrate her, and Hortense could do nothing to parry it. She was a queen, and yet she was a helpless, unhappy woman, who envied the beggar in the street her freedom and the humbleness of her lot. Both mother and daughter stood on the topmost round of the ladder of human greatness, and yet this empress and this queen both felt so wretched and lonely, that they looked back with regret to the days of the Revolution, to the time when, in poverty and want, they had led a humble and obscure life. Then, although poor, they were rich in hopes and wishes, while, now that they possessed everything brilliant that life is capable of offering, now that millions bowed before them and honoured them with the proud title of "Majesty," they had nothing to hope for, nothing to look for; all the sweet illusions and dreams of former days had faded away, and there was nothing left but the cold, stern reality.

One consolation indeed remained, that of which no one could deprive them, the privilege of weeping in each other's arms.

A few days after her arrival Hortense was summoned to the Emperor's study. Napoleon rose with great animation, but as he met Hortense's eyes, which were red with weeping, he hesitated.

"Hortense," he said at last, "we are on the eve of a great sacrifice, from which I must not shrink. France has done so much for me and my family, that I am in duty bound to comply with what she wishes. The peace and welfare of this country demand that I should choose a wife who may give the nation an heir to the throne. For six months Josephine has been living in fear and uncertainty, and this must end. You, Hortense, are her dearest friend, her confidante, you she loves more than any one else in this world. Will you undertake to prepare your mother for the fate that awaits her? By complying with my wishes you would remove a heavy burden from my heart."

Hortense had sufficient strength of mind to repress her tears, and to look fixedly on the face of the Emperor. Again he involuntarily fell back a step, and his eye sought the ground, just as the lion retires before the flashing, angry glance of a pure and innocent maiden.

Hortense had the courage to refuse compliance with the Emperor's wishes.

"What! Hortense!" Napoleon said in a sorrowful voice, "do you refuse to fulfil my request?"

"Sire," she replied, hardly able to repress her tears any longer, "I have not the strength to bury the dagger in my mother's breast." And disregarding all etiquette, Hortense turned round and quitted the room.

Napoleon made one more attempt to apprize Josephine of her fate through a third person. He begged Eugène, the viceroy of Italy, to come to Paris, and acquainted him with his intentions and wishes. Eugène, like Hortense, heard the Emperor's resolution with silent sorrow, but he too declared his unwillingness to be the bearer of a message that must destroy the happiness of his mother. The Emperor was consequently compelled to deliver the mournful message himself.

It was on the 30th of November, 1809. The Emperor, as usual, took his dinner with the Empress. The gloomy look with which he entered the room made Josephine's heart quake. She read on his features that the moment of decision had arrived. But she repressed her tears; she only cast an imploring glance at Hortense, who, pale and downcast, sat on the opposite side of the table.

Not a word was spoken during that melancholy dinner. The oppressive, convulsive sighs that rose in the breast of the Empress could be distinctly heard. Outside, the wind howled and groaned, and drove the rain fiercely against the clattering windows. In the dining-room there reigned a deep, unbroken silence. The fierce contest of the elements without contrasted strangely with the silence within. Once

only was the monotony of the dinner interrupted. It was when the Emperor asked one of the servants in a harsh voice what time it was. Then all was silent again.

At last Napoleon rose. He took his coffee standing. He emptied the cup hastily, and as he put it aside his hands trembled and made the vessel clatter. Then, with an abrupt movement of the hand, he ordered all present to retire.

"Sire," Josephine asked in a voice that was scarcely audible, "may Hortense stay with me?"

"No!" the Emperor replied, impatiently. Hortense bowed respectfully, and giving a compassionate glance to her mother, left the room. All the court followed her.

The Emperor and the Empress were left by themselves. They were both silent. What a terrible silence it was! How sadly they stood opposite each other! What a melancholy look the Emperor cast on his wife! She saw in his convulsively agitated features the awful struggle that was going on in his breast, and knew she was about to fall.

At length he approached her, and stretched forth his hand. It trembled. Josephine felt as if about to be suffocated, and a feverish heat coursed through her veins.

Napoleon took the hand of the Empress, and placed it on his heart. She offered no resistance, but a groan of agony escaped her as he did so. Napoleon, with a mournful but steady glance, looked her full in the face.

"Josephine," he said, in a voice that trembled with emotion, "my dear Josephine, you know that I love you. To you alone I am indebted for the few moments of happiness that have fallen to my lot. But fate is stronger than my will. My dearest inclinations must yield to the interests of France."

"Say no more!" Josephine said, angrily withdrawing her hand from his grasp. "Say no more! I understand you and expected it. But the blow is not the less deadly for that reason!"

She could say no more. Her voice failed her, for she was overcome by utter despair. The storm that had been spell-bound so long, had broken loose, and now raged with the utmost violence.

She wept, she wrung her hands, and would have cried out in the bitterness of her agony, had not her voice failed her. At last, as if Heaven had compassion on her, she fell into a deep swoon, which freed her from the consciousness of her misery.

When she awoke she found herself in bed. Hortense and the court physician stood by her side. Josephine stretched her arms towards her daughter, who, passionately weeping, sank on the bosom of her mother. Corvisart retired, for he knew that he could afford no further assistance. He had been able to recall Josephine to the consciousness of her wretchedness; but it was beyond his power to remove the cause of her misery. The sympathy and tears of Hortense were the only balsam the Empress had to soothe the pain of her heart.

Josephine wept long and abundantly in her daughter's arms, but when Napoleon came to inquire after the state of her health—when he sat down at her bed-side—she shrunk from him, her tears ceased to flow, and those eyes, which had always been accustomed to look kindly on him, were animated by a flash of anger and contempt. But love soon vanquished her resentment. She stretched out her feverish hand to the Emperor, and her lips bore the angelic smile of a forgiving woman as she said:

"Well, my friend, was I not right in shrinking from becoming an empress?"

Napoleon made no reply. He turned away and wept. But these valedictory tears of his love could no longer influence the fate of the unfortunate Josephine, which had for some time been irrevocably fixed. Napoleon had already received at Vienna the consent to his marriage with the Archduchess Marie Louise, the daughter of the Emperor of Austria. Nothing remained to be done but to remove Josephine, in order that a legitimate empress might take possession of her throne.

The Emperor would not, could not, alter his resolution. He assembled around him all his brothers, all the kings, dukes, and princes who had been created by his potent will, and before the Imperial family, the court, and the senate, who were all assembled in the Tuileries, he declared, with a firm voice, his intention to separate from his wife. Josephine, who for the last time appeared in the Imperial robes, stood by the side of Napoleon and repeated his words.

Her speech was broken and interrupted by frequent sobs.

The Lord High Chancellor Cambacères then ordered one of the secretaries of state, present on the occasion, to read out the law of the *code civile* treating on divorce, spoke a few words regarding its applicability to the present case, and declared the union of the Emperor with the Empress dissolved.

Thus the ceremony was finished, the demands of the law had been satisfied, and Josephine had now to bid farewell to her husband and the court. She did so with an angelic kindness, with that sweet, heart-winning smile which she could command better than almost any other woman. Pale, but apparently composed, she bowed to Napoleon. The Emperor spoke some hurried, indistinct words, and an expression of agonizing pain flashed across his features. At the moment when, led by her two children, Josephine left the room, nodding a last farewell to all assembled, sobbing and weeping could be heard on all sides. Her enemies, even those who rejoiced in her fall, because they hoped to derive advantage from the new marriage, felt moved as they beheld this melancholy scene. There were very few present whose eyes were not bedimmed with tears.

The victim had been offered up. Napoleon had sacrificed to his ambition what, next to it, he loved best on earth. He was separated from Josephine.

On the same day Josephine left the Tuileries to retire to Malmaison, where she intended to live in

the mansion which had once been the Paradise, but was now the purgatory, of her love.

She left the court, but the hearts of its members continued devoted to her. During the first few weeks of her retirement the road from Paris to Malmaison was literally covered with the carriages of all the kings and princes, all the dignitaries and noblemen, who were at Paris. There was an uninterrupted procession between the capital and the residence of the ex-Empress. Even the Faubourg St Germain, which still preserved its sympathies for the Bourbons, and had its secret representatives in Paris, showed this mark of respect. And it was not only the rich and exalted who condoled with Josephine, but also the poor and lowly. Every one, no matter whether poor or rich, high or low, was desirous of showing the ex-Empress how much she was still beloved and revered, and she continued to reign over the hearts of her people, although she had ceased to sit on a throne.

The whole French nation mourned with Josephine and her children. There was a general belief that the Emperor's star was about to set, that with Josephine his good genius had deserted him, and that fate would not fail to avenge the tears of the deserted Empress.

Metternich, who believed that the alliance of Austria and France would be beneficial to the interests of the former country, and enable him to settle the Eastern question satisfactorily and in defiance o Russia, suggested that the Archduchess Marie Louise

should be given in marriage to the victorious soldier of France.

When Lord Castlereagh heard of the marriage, he said with a smile, "A virgin must now and then be sacrificed to the Minotaur." The Viennese formed even a more malicious judgment regarding this act of desperation on the part of their Emperor. They said of Napoleon, "Now it is all up with him, now we have him, for he has been vaccinated with the Austrian misfortune and Austrian stupidity." To a certain extent this simple prophecy was correct. The alliance with Austria became Napoleon's misfortune, in so far as it led him into further errors with respect to the greatness of his power.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE KING OF HOLLAND.

WHILE Josephine lamented the dissolution of her marriage, Hortense wished and prayed that her unhappy union with Louis Bonaparte might be terminated by a similar solution. Hortense, although still living with her husband, had never felt any attachment for him. She now again besought the Emperor, as did her husband, to sanction a divorce.

But Napoleon was inexorable. His family was not to set the country the bad example of disregarding the sanctity of matrimony. His own divorce had been

dictated by political considerations, and equally through political considerations he was unwilling that his brother should dissolve his marriage.

Thus the unfortunate couple were compelled to continue dragging their chains, which they both did with revolting hearts; and as they had no one they could reproach for their misfortune, they reproached each other and daily grew more and more hostile.

Louis returned to Holland, more gloomy than ever. Hortense, with her two sons, stayed for some time longer at Paris, Napoleon having ordered her to do so, as she was to be present at his marriage with the Archduchess Marie Louise, which was soon to take place. The daughter of the divorced Empress, together with the sisters of the Emperor, was destined to bear the train of the new Empress on her wedding-day. Napoleon meant to prove to the world that his relations knew no other law but his will, and that the daughter of Josephine had never ceased to be his obedient child. Besides, he wished to attach the Queen, who had inherited the grace and loveliness of her mother, to the person of his young wife. She would be a model to all the court, and an amiable and considerate mentor to the Empress.

Hortense silently obeyed Napoleon. On the 1st of April, 1810, the day on which the Archduchess Marie Louise became Empress of France, she bore the new sovereign's train, together with the Emperor's sisters. She alone did so without opposition, for Napoleon's sisters, Queen Caroline of Naples, the

Duchess of Guastalla, and Eliza, Grand-duchess of Tuscany, strongly protested before they obeyed their brother's command, and followed the new Empress with an angry flush on their cheek, and tears in their eyes.

There were other persons, besides the Emperor's sisters, who felt dissatisfied on Napoleon's wedding-day. The majority of the high clergy were among them. But few of the dignitaries of the Church had accepted the invitation of the Master of the Ceremonies, who in obedience to orders had asked them to be present at the marriage of the Imperial couple, which took place in the chapel of the Tuileries.

Napoleon could not punish his sisters on account of their tears, but he chastised the disobedience of the Cardinals, who had not made their appearance in the chapel. The next morning they were all banished from the capital, and forbidden to wear the purple robe appertaining to their rank, instead of which they were to adopt the black dress of penitents.

The Parisians too were dissatisfied with the Emperor's choice. They received Marie Louise with an artificial enthusiasm, looking upon the Austrian as being ominous to France. When, soon after the marriage, at a ball given by Prince Metternich in honour of the alliance, that terrible conflagration took place which destroyed so many human lives, the mob were inclined to ascribe it to the presence of the new Empress. They remembered the sad accident which had occurred during Marie Antoinette's entry into Paris, and regarded the fire as the precursor of

the misfortunes which the "Austrian" would bring upon France and her Emperor.

Whilst Hortense was attending the festivities at the Imperial court, a storm was gathering over the head of her husband, which was soon to threaten both his life and his crown.

When Louis, obedient to the Emperor's will, accepted the crown of the Netherlands, he solemnly vowed to himself to be a faithful sovereign to his people, and to devote all his energies to the welfare of Holland. He was too honest a man not to fulfil this oath. He thought only of adopting such measures and issuing such edicts as might serve to make the country prosperous, and in doing so never cared whether the path he pursued crossed the interests of France or not. He was unwilling to look upon Holland as a province of France, for he thought he was more than a viceroy of the Emperor. He considered the Netherlands as a free country, and himself a free king. But Napoleon did not at all regard matters in this light, and it appeared to him an unheard-of sacrilege that Holland should wish to deny the supremacy of France.

When the Emperor placed on his brother's head the crown of Holland, he exhorted him to be a good king to his people, but never to cease being a Frenchman, and always to consult the interests of France in his policy. Louis, however, had striven to become a thorough Dutchman, and therefore, when the interests of the two countries became hostile, he did not hesitate for one moment to side with the

nation whose king he was, and to think and act as if he were one of its native princes. He was of opinion that Holland owed her wealth to nothing but her commerce, and that she could only be great by her mercantile importance. Consequently he reduced the army and navy, changed the men-of-war into merchant vessels, and converted the marines into peaceful sailors.

Napoleon, however, regarded these proceedings with dismay, and severely blamed the King for disarming the fleet and disbanding the army. "Holland," he said, "was in a defenceless state, for merchants and shopkeepers were incapable of consolidating a power." A still greater crime was the re-opening of commercial intercourse with England. Holland disregarded the blockade Napoleon had proclaimed against Great Britain, and the American flag, which was banished from all French ports, fluttered safely in the harbours of Holland.

The Emperor demanded of King Louis that he should consult nothing but the interests of France. With this view he insisted that Holland should break off all commercial intercourse with England, equip a fleet of forty line-of-battle ships, seven frigates, and seven brigs, and raise the army to 25,000 men. In addition, all the privileges of the nobility, that were contrary to the Constitution, were to be abolished.

King Louis had courage enough to refuse, in the name of Holland, compliance with these demands; for he clearly perceived that, in order to obey the

orders of the Emperor, it would be necessary to sacrifice the prosperity of his adopted country.

Napoleon answered this refusal by a declaration of war. The Dutch ambassador at Paris received his passports, and a French *corps d'armée* began moving towards the Netherlands to chastise the obstinacy of the King.

However, the misfortune by which Holland was threatened had roused all Louis's energy. Threats and angry letters seeming unable to curb his will, the Duke of Reggio, the commander-in-chief of the army of invasion, at last approached Amsterdam, to force the King, by a siege of that important town, into compliance with the Emperor's wishes. Louis, seeing that further resistance was useless, but determined not to depart from his line of conduct, resolved upon descending from the throne.

In a proclamation addressed to his people, he told them that, "feeling convinced he was unable to do the cause of Holland any further good, but, on the contrary, considering himself an obstacle to a reconciliation with France, he had resolved upon abdicating in favour of his two sons, Napoleon Louis, and Charles Louis Napoleon." Until their majority, their mother, agreeably to the Constitution, was to stand at the head of the regency. After having thus settled the question of succession, he addressed a few touching farewell words to his subjects, and then left the country *incognito*, under the name of the Count de St Leu. Passing through the dominions

of his brother Jérôme, the King of Westphalia, and through Saxony, he went to Töplitz, where he stopped to drink the waters.

It was here he first heard that Napoleon, refusing to acknowledge his abdication, had incorporated Holland with the empire of France. Louis published a protest against his brother's proceedings, calling the Emperor's measure an act of violence which nothing could justify. In the name of his son, Napoleon Louis, he demanded the restoration of Holland, its annexation to France being contrary to the sacred law of nations, and its incorporation therefore void.

Napoleon replied to this protest, by commanding the French ambassador at Vienna to tell Louis to return to France before the 1st of December, 1810, warning him that a non-compliance with this order would be regarded in the light of high treason, and that he would be considered a rebel against the constitution of France and the head of his family, and treated accordingly.

Louis took no notice of this summons. He retired to Grätz in Styria, and lived there as a private gentleman, beloved and admired, not only by those who were near his person, but almost by the whole of Europe. People could not help feeling esteem for a king who had so nobly sacrificed his own greatness to the welfare of his people. His enemies even, and those of his family, could not but acknowledge that he had acted magnanimously, and Louis XVIII. said, in speaking of him, "Louis Bonaparte has become a real king by his abdication. By laying down his

crown he has shown himself worthy of wearing it. He is the first monarch who has offered up such a sacrifice, actuated by love of his country only. Others have resigned the purple before him, but they did it because they were tired of power. In the King of Holland's way of acting there is something which has not as yet been rightly appreciated, but which, if I am not very much mistaken, will command the admiration of posterity."

At Grätz Louis Bonaparte spent, as Count de St Leu, a few peaceful and quiet years—the first and perhaps the only years of happiness he had enjoyed amid the storms and disappointments of a tempestuous life. Spending his days in study and meditation, he did not at all seem to regret the loss of his exalted station. As he had formerly endeavoured to be a good king, now it was his ambition to become a distinguished author. He published a novel, which bore the title of "Marie," and, encouraged by the success it met with amongst his friends, he had some of his poetry also printed. The deep, passionate feeling that characterized his verses proved that his heart, so often misunderstood, and consequently shy, wounded, and suspicious, was nevertheless capable of a pure, disinterested love—a love which Maria Pascal, the beautiful and accomplished harp-player, is thought not to have resisted.

But the day came when Louis Bonaparte, closing his ear against the sweet voice of peace and love, and listening to duty only, which commanded him to return to France, repaired to the side of his brother.

So long as the sun of success shone brightly over Napoleon, the ex-king of Holland, who had voluntarily descended from his throne, remained distant and in obscurity, but no sooner did misfortune break in over the Emperor than he returned to offer him his advice and support. In the hour of danger there was but one place for Napoleon's brave and faithful brother —it was that by the side of the Emperor.

"On the day when Austria so unexpectedly broke her alliance with France," says Madame de St Elme, who was at Grätz at the time, and witnessed the farewell scene that took place between Louis Bonaparte and the inhabitants of that town, "King Louis felt the necessity of leaving an asylum, for which henceforth he could only have been indebted to the enemies of France. He hastened to demand from his great but unjust brother the only place that was worthy of the dignity of his character, a place by the Emperor's side.

"But what a source of regret was his departure to the inhabitants of Grätz, indeed of all Styria; for there was no pious or charitable foundation in the country that had not received help from his hands. And yet it was well known that the means of the monarch who had descended from the throne so hurriedly and unprepared were but slender, and that he denied himself many a pleasure in order to assist others. They begged, they besought him not to go from amongst them. When they saw him persist in his resolution, when the horses, which at first had been withheld, were brought at last to bear him away,

the people of Grätz unharnessed them, and themselves drew the carriage as far as the gate of the town. His voluntary departure resembled a triumphal march. The banished, homeless King left his exile amidst sincere demonstrations of love, such as had hardly been shown on the occasion of his ascension to the throne."

CHAPTER XVII.

JUNOT, DUC D'ABRANTÈS.

WHILE all his faithful friends hurried up to collect round Napoleon, and offer the hero, threatened by fate and man, their help and support, while even his brother Louis, forgetting all insults and humiliations, hastened to him, one of his most honest and devoted friends—one on whom the Emperor might have reckoned in need and in death—was kept far from him by destiny.

This was the friend of his youth, his comrade in arms, Junot, who, issuing from a poor family, had raised himself by his heroic courage and merits to the rank of Duc d'Abrantès. He alone remained behind when the trumpets of war, with their ill-omened clang, summoned all Napoleon's generals to Paris. But he was absent, not because he wished it, but because his destiny decreed it.

Junot, the hero of so many battles, the *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*, the former Governor of

Madrid, the present Governor of Istria and Illyria, was afflicted by the worst and most awful of diseases,—sickness of the brain! The scars that covered his head and brow, and afforded such noble testimony of his bravery, at the same time revealed the source of his sufferings. His head, so frequently assailed by sabre strokes, might be externally cured, but the wounds had left their mental mark behind.

The hero of so many brilliant actions was at this important crisis a poor lunatic, although still the omnipotent and unchecked ruler of Istria and Illyria. Napoleon, on appointing him for the second time Governor of these provinces, had invested him with truly regal authority. As he knew the noble temper, fidelity, and devotion of his brother-in-arms, he endowed him with the attributes of a despotic sovereign, and allowed him to govern in his stead. Hence, no one had the power to deprive the madman of his authority, or to wrest the sceptre from his grasp. Napoleon had placed it in his hand, and he alone could demand its return. Even Eugène, the Viceroy of Italy, to whom the estates of Istria applied for help in their terror and despair, was unable to assist them; he could only say to them, "Send a courier to the Emperor, and await his reply."

But at that day it was not such an easy matter to send couriers a distance of a thousand miles: there were no railways, no telegraphs, and the power of electricity and magnetism had not yet been rendered subservient to the will of man. The Illyrians at once sent off a courier to the Emperor, to demand an

alleviation of their sufferings; but the Russian proverb, "The sky is high and the Emperor far away," was specially applicable to them. Weeks must elapse ere the courier could return with the Emperor's answer, and until then there was no help, they had no other orders to obey but those of the Duc d'Abrantès, the poor maniac.

There was no one in authority, however high his office, however great his power, who dared to interfere with the Governor, or to assume that right of administration which was his only, without insulting the authority with which a Napoleon had invested the vicegerent of his own choice.

Napoleon, who was now so near his downfall that his crown was already beginning to tremble on his head, still possessed such a gigantic might, that its reflection sufficed to cover, at a distance of a thousand miles from the French frontier, the irresponsible actions of a man who had lost the mastery of his judgment and will.

How handsome, how amiable, and chivalrous had Junot been in his earlier days; how gloriously had he enchanted the pretty women in the salons and the soldiers on the battle-field! In all chivalrous arts he had been the master, everywhere and ever the undoubted victor and hero. As such he had won the heart of Mademoiselle de Permont; and, in spite of her mother's horror, the daughter of the haughty Baroness of the Faubourg St Germain had willingly resolved on becoming the wife of the soldier of the Republic, the brother-in-arms of Napoleon. Al-

though Junot possessed no other fortune but his pay, no other nobility than his sword and his renown, these sufficed to win the heart of the daughter of a stern legitimist mother, proud as that daughter might be of calling herself the last descendant of the Comneni.

Napoleon, who was very fond of seeing the alliance of his generals and young nobility with the legitimate aristocracy of France, amply rewarded the daughter of the Faubourg St Germain for the sacrifice she had made to his brother-in-arms by giving up her armorial bearings and glorious name, to become the wife of a general without ancestry or fortune. He made his friend a Duke, and the Duchess d'Abrantès had no longer to be ashamed of her title. The descendant of the Comneni could be satisfied with the homage rendered her as the wife of the Governor of Lisbon, and with the laurels that adorned her husband's brow—to which he added a fresh spray, but also fresh wounds, on every battle-field.

The consequences of these wounds covered the hero's laurels with a dark mourning veil, and annihilated the domestic happiness of the Duchess. She perceived sooner than others the sorrowful condition of her husband, but kept it a secret from everybody. She refused, however, to accompany him to his Illyrian government, and remained behind in Paris, still hoping that a change of climate and circumstances might restore his health.

But Junot's mind remained diseased. The attacks

of insanity and frenzy, which had formerly been isolated and rare, now became more frequent, and could no longer be kept secret. All Illyria knew that their Governor was a maniac, and yet no one dared to oppose his will, or to refuse obedience to his orders, while humbly awaiting the return of the courier who had been sent to the Emperor in Paris.

"But heaven is high and the Emperor afar!" and much that was wrong could and did occur ere the courier returned to Trieste, where Junot resided. The sufferings of the poor Duke daily increased; his outbreaks, which were produced by the slightest irritation, became more frequent and violent.

On one occasion a nightingale that sang in the bushes under his window disturbed him in his sleep; the next morning he called out all his troops, and two battalions of Croats were told off to begin a campaign against the poor bird which had dared to disturb the slumbers of a Duke.

Another time, fancying he had discovered a great conspiracy formed by all the sheep in Illyria, he directed the entire attention of the police, and all the severity of the law, against the harmless animals.

Then, again, he formed a sudden and romantic passion for a young Greek girl who was a member of his household. As the maiden sought to oppose the pride of her virtue to his solicitations, he resolved, in a fit of desperation, to fire his palace, and destroy his heart and his love in the flames. Fortunately his purpose was discovered betimes, and the fire he had lighted was extinguished.

Next he was affected by a passionate dislike of all the noise and splendour that surrounded him, and longed to retire from the bustle of festivities, and the brilliancy of his position, to the silent and unpretending existence of a poor peasant.

He continued to desire life in a cabin, and as there was no one who possessed the right to divest him of his exalted dignity and gratify his wishes, he resolved, of his own authority, to throw off the trammels that so oppressed his sick heart, and to withdraw from the annoyances which his position entailed on him.

Under the pretext of making a tour of inspection through the provinces, he quitted Trieste, in order to lead for a few weeks a fresh existence, which appeared for a moment to soothe his excitement. Almost incognito he arrived at the little town of Goritzia, where he inquired at the inn in which he lodged for the most modest and insignificant house dedicated to the harmless and innocent revelry of honest workmen. He was told that the house known as the "Icepit" was one of that description, the labourers being accustomed to refresh themselves there, after the fatigues of the day, over a social pitcher of the lightest beer or wine.

The Governor of Illyria took up his abode at the "Icepit," which he rarely left either by day or night. Like the great Haroun al Raschid, he took part in the harmless merriment which was there enjoyed, joining in the innocent amusements of happy and contented poverty. Here this distracted heart, once

so great and benevolent, found its last consolation, its last joy—a friend!

This last friend of the Duc d'Abrantès, this Pylades of the poor mad Orestes, was a lunatic! a poor idiot of good family, and so good-tempered and harmless that he was allowed to go about unwatched, people only laughing at his follies, which inflicted injury on none, although with all his good-humour he possessed a biting wit and clever buffoonery, which spared no rank or station.

The half-droll, half-sarcastic "lazzi" of this Istrian Diogenes were soon alone able to distract the gloomy sorrow of the wandering hero; and it afforded him unending pleasure to hear that grandeur and brilliancy which he had gained so dearly, and yet enjoyed so slightly, turned into ridicule. The idiot possessed a peculiar talent for imitating, in the most burlesque fashion, the pomp of the Governor, and the French elegance of his officials, and when he did this, the delight of his princely friend knew no bounds.

Once after a scene of this description the Duc d'Abrantès was so delighted that he threw himself into the arms of his companion, and invested him with the noble insignia of the Legion of Honour, placing on his neck the Grand Cross of this order, which he himself wore.

The Emperor had given Junot full powers to grant this order in the provinces of Illyria and Istria; and hence no one could deprive the lunatic Diogenes of the honours the Governor himself had bestowed on him. For weeks, therefore, the mad fool would

be seen walking about the streets of Goritzia, pluming himself, like a peacock, on the Grand Cross of Napoleon's noble and honourable order, and at the same time making the most sarcastic and biting jokes about his own decoration. The Duc frequently accompanied him on his wanderings; at one moment laughing loudly at the jokes of the lunatic, at another listening to them with breathless attention, as if they were the oracular sayings of a wise seer. Thus the strange pair walked through the streets, or sat down arm in arm upon a stone by the road-side, making strange remarks about the passers-by, or philosophizing on the vanity of state and grandeur, the littleness and wickedness of the world, thus realizing the heart-rending and affecting scenes between Lear and his fool, which Shakspeare has written for us.

After weeks of expectation, Napoleon's message at length arrived, which removed poor suffering Junot from his post and dignities, and appointed the Duke of Otranto in his stead.

The Duc d'Abrantès left Illyria and returned to France, where, after a long and painful struggle, he found in the little town of Maitbart a sad and solitary end to a life full of military glory, heroic courage, and unstained honour.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LOUIS NAPOLEON AS A SELLER OF VIOLETS.

THE sun, which had so long dazzled the eyes of Europe, was about to set—Napoleon's star began to be obscured by clouds. Fortune had bestowed on him everything which can be given to mortal man. She had laid nearly all the crowns of Europe at his feet, had made him the lord and master of numerous monarchies and nations. At Erfurt as well as at Dresden the Emperor's antechamber was the meeting-place of most of the legitimate or illegitimate princes of Europe. England alone had never covered her hostile face with a mask of friendship—had never bowed before a dreaded and hated neighbour. Napoleon, the lord of continental Europe, whom emperors and kings called "brother," and in doing so felt flattered, might now begin to look back upon his past. He had risen so high that he needed no longer to deny the lowly sphere whence he had sprung.

During the time the Congress of Erfurt was assembled, all the emperors and kings present were one day assembled round Napoleon's table. He sat between the Russian Czar, his enthusiastic friend, and the Emperor of Austria, his father-in-law, whilst opposite to him were the King of Prussia, his ally, from whom he had taken Westphalia and the Rhenish

provinces, and the Kings of Bavaria and Würtemberg, who had received their regal crowns from his hand, and who had given their children in marriage to his family; the former having married his daughter to Eugène Beauharnois, and the latter being father-in-law of Jérôme Bonaparte.

There were also present the King of Saxony, and the Grand-Duke of Baden (who had married Josephine's niece, Stephanie de Beauharnois). These were all legitimate princes, whose pedigrees displayed a succession of proud dynasties, and in the midst of them sat the son of a Corsican lawyer, now Emperor of the French, to whom they all looked up with respect and admiration.

The conversation turning on Napoleon's marvellously good memory, the Emperor willingly explained to his guests how he had acquired it.

"While still a lieutenant," he began; but immediately the looks of his audience were fixed on their plates, shame and confusion seeming to have seized them, while on the brow of the Austrian Emperor appeared a cloud of anger at his son-in-law's allusion to his low origin.

Napoleon noticed it, and threw an angry glance round the table. Then, after a slight pause, taking up his narrative again, he began once more, and with marked accentuation, "When I had the honour to be a lieutenant—"

Alexander of Russia alone remained unembarrassed, and placing his hand on Napoleon's shoulder, smilingly nodded. He was the only one who listened

with pleasure to the story about the time when Bonaparte "had the honour of being a lieutenant."

Napoleon had risen so high that hardly anything was now left him to desire, for Fortune had granted him even what he had wished most ardently for, an heir. On the 20th of May, 1811, his wife, Marie Louise, had given birth to a son, the little King of Rome, who was welcomed by the whole nation as the heir of his great father. Napoleon's dynasty thus seemed consolidated. Numerous festivities took place in celebration of the happy event.

Balls and banquets were given by the Queen of Naples, in the house of the Grand-Duchess of Guastala, and by all the Dukes of the empire, as well as the Queen of Holland.

Hortense felt ill and suffering; a nervous headache had tormented her for some time, and betrayed the secret of her distress, which she tried to conceal within her breast.

The roses on her cheek had faded away, and her eyes were less bright than formerly. From Malmaison, where Josephine was bewailing her unhappy fate, after Hortense had endeavoured to dry her tears and soothe the pang of her heart, she had been compelled to hasten to the Tuileries, to display a smiling face to her who was "her Empress," and the happy rival of her mother.

But Hortense had made up her mind to take life as it was, to play her part in a manner worthy of herself and of her mother. She endeavoured accordingly to be a true and faithful friend to the Empress, and to

meet the wishes of her stepfather, who desired her to see society in her house, and to take part in the festivities of the court.

"The Emperor wishes it, the Emperor said so,"—this was sufficient for all who surrounded him, and for Hortense not less than for the rest. Her mother was living in retirement because the Emperor willed it, Hortense had remained at court because it was his wish that she should do so, and she now saw society because the Emperor demanded it.

But the parties of the Carnival of 1813 were of a sad and gloomy character. How many cripples and invalids had not the last year made! There was a terrible scarcity of dancing young men at the balls; continual wars had made them old before their time, and most of them were lame and crippled.

But the conqueror's ambition was not yet satiated. There were still a few crowns he had not yet weighed in his hand. Russia was one of them, and he had as yet been unable to break a gem out of her diadem. Napoleon, therefore, marched to Russia, to seek the crown of the czars in the Kremlin.

But his star grew pale amidst the flames of Moscow, the sun of his glory and renown was unable to melt the snow and ice that destroyed his splendid army on the banks of the Beresina and at Wilna. Fortune had deserted the conqueror; and, stripped of his glory and his legions, Napoleon returned from Russia.

The year 1813 began in an ominous manner. Superstitious and timid people considered the very number 13 indicative of misfortune, and beheld with

dismay that the year opened with a Friday. New-year's day was nevertheless welcomed with the customary merry-making. People tried to drown the warning voice of presentiment in the sounds of joyous music. The Emperor ordered that balls should be given at court, and by the members of the Imperial family. He desired to prove to the Parisians that his confidence in the future was undiminished. He did not wish the campaign of 1812 to be regarded as a great national misfortune. Those who had been robbed of their fathers or brothers in the ice-fields of Russia, without even the satisfaction of having lost them through death in battle, were obliged to conceal their tears, and those whose relations had returned crippled and broken in health were expected to celebrate their return with rejoicing and festivities.

The Emperor had ordered that balls should be given, and Hortense obeyed. She arranged quadrilles "*en costume*," for which she herself designed the dresses and composed the music, and as able-bodied young men were so scarce that dancing could not be enjoyed to any considerable extent, she introduced new pastimes and amusements. Charades were acted, and *tableaux vivants* represented.

But whilst Hortense was thus the soul of court festivity, and to all appearance heartily enjoyed the fleeting hour, her mind was troubled by gloomy presentiments of the misfortune which she well knew was not to be averted. She determined to prepare

for the days of trial which she anticipated, and endeavoured to impress her two beloved sons with a deep sense of the instability and vanity of earthly grandeur, and with a manly contempt of danger. She had no compassion for the tender age of the boys of eight and six, because she loved them too well to wish to bring them up effeminately. She possessed the sterling affection of an energetic mother, who does not indulge her child, but subjects it to a severe course of training, that it may be able to sustain the struggle with adversity and resist the arrows of fate. Hortense, in the midst of her splendour, never missed an opportunity of speaking to her sons of days of misfortune which they might yet have to encounter, and which they ought to face without shrinking.

One day the Duchess of Bassano gave a ball in honour of the Queen, and Hortense, although sad and suffering, left her *coussin*, and allowed herself to be dressed. Her fair hair, which when unfastened reached down to her feet, was arranged in the ancient Greek fashion and ornamented with a garland of flowers. These were no natural ones, however, but made of diamonds. She wore a dress of rose-coloured crape, embroidered with a garland of large silver hortensias. The skirt of her dress and her train were garnished with violets and roses, made of precious stones, and on her bosom glistened a *bouquet* of diamonds and hortensias. Necklace and bracelets were of the same costly material, and represented similar flowers.

In this splendid dress (it was a present, sent to her, on the previous day, by her mother) she entered the drawing-room, followed by the richly-attired ladies and gentlemen of her court, who were to follow her to the ball.

The sight presented by this room, full of ladies glittering with diamonds, and of officers in rich uniforms, was truly magnificent. The sons of Hortense, who at this moment entered the salon to take leave of their "bonne petite maman," stopped short, as if dazzled for the moment by so much splendour, and then approached their mother almost timidly. She seemed to appear before them like one of the genii in the Arabian Nights. The Queen guessed the thoughts of her boys, whose ingenuous faces resembled an open book, wherein every one of their feelings might be read. Stretching out a hand to each of the children, she proceeded to a chair, on which she sat down. The younger, Louis Napoleon, who was then six years of age, she took on her lap, whilst Napoleon Louis, two years older than his brother, remained standing at his mother's side, resting his curly head on her shoulder, and looking up with a thoughtful eye to her pale cheek. "Well, Napoleon," said Hortense, as she laid her white, elegant hand on the head of her eldest son, "do you not think I am very beautifully dressed to-day? Should you love me less if I were poor, if I wore no diamonds, but only a simple black dress? should you like me less then?"

"No, mamma," replied the boy, almost colouring

with anger; and little Louis Napoleon, who was sitting on his mother's lap, repeated with his tender voice the words of his brother, "No, mamma!"

The Queen smiled, and said:

"Diamonds and fine dresses do not make people happy. We three should love each other quite as well if we possessed none, but were poor. But tell me, Napoleon, what should you do, if you had nothing, and were left alone in the world? what should you do to maintain yourself?"

"I should become a soldier," replied Napoleon, with glistening eyes, "and fight so valiantly that they would be obliged to promote me!"

"And you, Louis? What should you do to earn your bread?"

The little boy, who had attentively listened to what his brother said, seemed still to be thinking about it. The conclusion to which he came was that as the knapsack and the musket must be too heavy for him, he was therefore too young to be a soldier.

"I," he said after a pause,—"I should sell bouquets of violets, like the poor little boy that stands at the gate of the Tuileries, to whom you always give something when passing."

The ladies and gentlemen, who had listened to the children's talk, burst out laughing at little Louis's answer.

"Do not laugh, ladies," the Queen said, with a serious face, "it was no jest. I intended to give my sons a lesson, as I saw they were dazzled by the splendour of our diamonds. It is generally the mis-

fortune of princes to imagine that they are made of a different material from other men, and therefore have no obligations towards them. They rarely know anything about human sufferings and want, and think it almost impossible that these should ever assail them. As soon, therefore, as adversity befalls them, they are so surprised and disconcerted that they cannot find the strength to resist, but are crushed. From such a fate I will preserve my sons!"

Hortense kissed the two boys, and went with her suite to the Tuileries. The two little princes continued for some time to discuss the question thus presented to their minds, whether it would be easier to earn one's bread by becoming a soldier or by selling violets at the gate of the Tuileries.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DAYS OF ADVERSITY.

The banquets and balls amongst which the Parisians tried to forget approaching danger were soon to come to a close. The thunder of the cannon that roared on the battle-fields of Hanau and Leipzig had drowned the sounds of the ball music in the Tuileries, and the salon of Queen Hortense, where people had been accustomed to sing and to play, now saw the hands of the ladies occupied with making lint for the wounded, who daily poured from the army into the hospitals of Paris.

Austria's and Russia's declaration of war had startled France out of her sweet dream of security, and battles lost had announced to her the sinking of the star which so long had shone over the Emperor's armies. Everybody felt the proximity of a crisis, and was preparing to fill the place which honour or duty should assign him in the hour when the storm, which hung in threatening clouds over France, should burst. It was at this time that Louis Napoleon returned from Grätz. He had heard the thunder-peals of Leipzig, and hastened to the defence of his brother. Hortense heard of his return with the feelings of a patriot rather than those of a wife.

"I rejoice," she said, "that my husband has come back. His return at the moment when all Europe rises against our country shows that he is a good Frenchman. He is a man of honour, and if we have been unable to sympathize with each other, it was because we both possessed faults that could not be reconciled.

"I," she added with a melancholy smile, after a pause, "I was too proud. They had spoilt me. I thought too much of myself, and that is a poor way to win a suspicious and suffering heart. He shows himself worthy of his character as a king by returning to join with all Frenchmen in the defence of his country. In this way alone we can show our gratitude for what the nation have done for our family."

In the first days of January, 1814, all Paris was

seized with a panic. The rumour spread that the enemy had crossed the frontiers of France, and that the Russians, Austrians, and Prussians were marching on the capital. For the first time after many a year of triumph, France trembled for her army, and believed in the possibility of defeat.

In the Tuileries there reigned a gloomy apprehension. When in former days the Emperor had departed for the army, they had always asked, "When shall we hear of the first victory?" On the present occasion they beheld with dismay the pale, careworn countenance of Napoleon.

The Emperor left Paris on the 24th of January, to take the command of the army. The Empress Maria Louisa was nominated Regent, and had a council at her side, composed of the Emperor's brothers and ministers. The Empress bid her husband adieu amidst tears, and Hortense, who was present at the farewell meeting, was obliged to stay with her for a long time in order to console her.

Hortense was far from really feeling the confidence she displayed to the Empress and her own court. She had never been able to believe in the stability of Napoleon's triumph and greatness, but had always been secretly preparing for the approaching danger, and therefore felt courageous now that the hour of adversity had actually arrived. She was ready to stand up in defence of her children, and showed composure and equanimity, whilst all the Imperial family trembled and despaired, and whilst the capital was

terrified by the announcement, "The Cossacks are coming!"

The Grand-Duke Constantine was said to have promised his troops that they should warm themselves with the ashes of Paris; and the Emperor Alexander is reported to have taken an oath that he would not rest until he had slept in the Tuileries.

In the capital people talked about nothing but pillage, murder, and outrage. They trembled not only for their lives, but also for their property, and hastened to conceal money, jewellery, and plate, to prevent them falling into the hands of the rapacious Cossack hordes.

Such hiding-places were constructed in the cellars or in the walls. The Duchess of Bassano ordered all her valuable moveables to be brought into a small and remote cabinet, the door of which she had bricked up and covered with paper. But unfortunately, amongst other things, several clocks had been placed there, which they had forgotten to stop, and their striking the hours revealed for a whole week the place of concealment which had been prepared with so much secrecy.

On Feb. 9, Macon was captured, and the Parisians, who will laugh and make jokes even on the day of judgment, declared that it had been unable to hold out, because it was attacked by *pièces de vingt-quatre*, and could only oppose to them *pièces de vingt vins*. It was also said:

"The sovereigns will make their entry by the Barrière de Trône, the Emperor will depart by that

of Enfer, the Empress by that of des Vertus, the Senators by the Barrière des Bons-hommes, the Councillors of State by Bicêtre, and the legislative corps and the national guard by Pantin."

The cry, "The Cossacks are coming!" however, was not the only one that startled the Parisians. Another shout, which had not been heard for a long time, and the sound of which was unknown to Imperial France, was again heard in the streets of Paris. That shout was "The Count of Lille!" or in the mouths of the Royalists, "King Louis the Eighteenth."

The legitimists no longer pronounced that name in a whisper, but with loud enthusiasm. Even those Royalists who had paid homage to the Emperor, and accepted kindnesses and distinctions from him, began to remove their masks and to show their natural countenance.

Madame du Cayla was one of the latter description. Although one of the most enthusiastic Royalists, she had frequently mixed with the society of the Imperial court. This lady now went to Hartwell, to convey to the Comte de Lille the assurance of the Parisian Royalists that they would remain faithful to him, and were longing to see him return to his country. They were preparing, she said, to accelerate his restitution to the throne of his fathers.

Madame du Cayla returned with full powers to organize the conspiracy of the Royalists, and to sanction, in the name of the King, all their steps. Talleyrand, Napoleon's minister, that talented

weathercock of politics, had already begun to experience a change of opinion. When the Countess du Cayla entered the cabinet of the premier, to whom she had to deliver some secret messages from Louis XVIII., she said with a loud voice,

"I have just come from Hartwell, I have seen the King, and he sends me to say—"

But Talleyrand interrupted her, by calling out in an angry voice,

"Are you mad, madam? You dare to confess such a crime?"

A moment afterwards he added in a whisper:

"So you have seen him? Well, you know I am his most humble and devoted servant."

The Royalists now began to hold their conferences and meetings pretty openly. The minister of police, Fouché, the Duke of Otranto, whose eyes and ears were everywhere, who received information of all that passed in Paris, was not ignorant of these plots of the Royalists, but he did not try to prevent them. On the contrary, he advised the legitimists to be cautious in their proceedings, in order to show how much interest he himself took in the fate of the unfortunate royal family.

Queen Hortense, amidst all these dangers and disturbances, preserved her presence of mind and her usual courage. Far from concealing her diamonds, money, and papers, as others had done, she continued to live in the same style as before. Her wish was to show the Parisians what unshaken confidence the Imperial family felt, and how firm was their belief

in victory. Accordingly, she lived in her usual regal manner, although for a long time nothing had been paid her out of the exhausted treasury. But she little cared for money; the high-minded, unselfish heart of the Queen was occupied by other thoughts than those of hiding her gold, or securing her pecuniary interests.

It was her desire to inspire the Empress Maria Louisa, whom the Emperor had nominated Regent of France, with the courage she herself possessed. She besought her therefore, in these days of danger and anxiety, to show herself worthy of the high confidence the Emperor had reposed in her, by adopting bold and energetic measures. When, on the 28th of March, the rumour spread that the allies were within five leagues of Paris, and thousands of fugitives left the capital, Hortense hastened to the Tuileries to advise the Empress not to leave the city, but courageously to remain at the post where her husband had placed her. In the name of Napoleon and of the little King of Rome she implored her to pay no heed to the resolution of the Council of Regency, who had declared "that Paris was incapable of defence, and that therefore the Empress, her son, and the Council of Regency should leave the capital."

Maria Louisa however would not listen to Hortense's high-minded advice; the Queen was unable to inspire her young sister-in-law with the energy by which she herself was animated.

"My sister," she said, "you cannot be ignorant of

the consequences of your leaving Paris. No defence of the capital will be attempted, and it may be your fault if you lose your crown. But I see you are ready to resign yourself to such a loss very easily."

"You are right," Maria Louisa answered; "I ought to act differently, but it is too late now. The Council of Regency have decided, and what can I do?"

Hortense, very much grieved, returned to her hôtel, where Lavalette, the wife of Marshal Ney, and the ladies of her court, were anxiously awaiting her.

"All is lost!" she said, with an expression of sadness on her face, that had never been remarked on it before. "Yes, all is lost! The Empress is bent upon leaving Paris. She seems to give up, without much regret, the Emperor and France. She is about to start."

"If such be the case," General Lavalette replied, "then indeed all is lost! And yet her courage and energy might this day save the Emperor, who is hastening towards Paris. So they have deliberated until they have chosen the very worst line of conduct. Well, it cannot be helped. But what will your Majesty do?"

"I remain in Paris," replied the Queen. "Since I am allowed to be mistress of my actions, I shall stay with the Parisians, and share their good or evil fortune. This is better, at all events, than being made a prisoner on the high road."

As soon as the Queen had formed this resolution,

she displayed the greatest calmness and composure. With unflinching courage she waited to see what the future would bring. She sent a messenger to Malmaison, to her poor mother, who had been forgotten by almost every one, imploring her to retreat to Navarre. Then, as it was already late at night, she retired to her bed-room.

In the middle of the night she was awakened in a melancholy manner. Her husband, who since his return to France had never come near her, now desired, in the hour of danger, to exercise his rights as head of the family. He therefore wrote to the Queen, demanding that she should follow, with her two sons, the Empress Maria Louisa.

Hortense refused compliance with his wishes. A second categorical message was the result, in which Louis told her that, unless she obeyed his commands immediately, and followed, with her children, the Empress, to whom his brother had confided the Regency, he would avail himself of his paternal rights, and take the two princes without delay out of her hands. At this threat the Queen started up from her bed like an irritated lioness, her cheeks feverish, her eyes burning. With a loud voice she ordered her two sons to be brought to her, clasped the boys passionately to her bosom, and said:

"Tell the King that I will depart this very hour."

CHAPTER XX.

THE ALLIES IN PARIS.

WHAT the departure of the Empress and the approach of the Cossacks had been unable to bring about, maternal love had effected. The Queen with her children and suite (which had already begun to grow very thin) left Paris, and arrived, after a long and fatiguing flight, already rendered unsafe by the flying cavalry of the Russians, at the castle of Navarre, where Josephine received her in her arms. Although everything else was lost, all her greatness vanished, and her heart still oppressed by Napoleon's misfortune, Josephine possessed at least her daughter. Her most faithful friend now stood by her side, and that was no small consolation in this time of sorrow and apprehension.

At Navarre, Hortense learned the fall of the empire, the surrender of the capital, its occupation by the allies, and the abdication of the Emperor.

When the courier whom the Duke of Bassano had despatched with these news arrived at Navarre to tell Josephine that Napoleon had been ordered to Elba, and was about to leave France for this place of exile, she threw herself on Hortense's breast, and said:

"Oh, Hortense, he is unhappy, and I cannot be with him! He has been banished to Elba. Oh, if it

was not for his wife, I should hasten to him, and share his exile."

Whilst Josephine wept and sighed, Hortense, who had retired to her apartments, thought of the consequences in which the members of the Imperial family would be involved by Napoleon's fall. She foresaw all the humiliations and persecutions to which they would be exposed, and with her children resolved to place herself beyond their reach. Her resolution was a sudden one, and it was suddenly carried into execution. Calling Mademoiselle de Cochelet, her reader, one of the few ladies who had remained by her side, she addressed her as follows:

"Louisa, I shall emigrate. I stand alone in the world, without any one to protect me, always menaced by a blow which is more terrible than the loss of greatness and crowns,—I mean the danger of being deprived of my children. My mother can remain in France, for divorce has given her back her liberty, but I bear a name which henceforth will be a crime in this country. Remember the Bourbons are returning. I have no other property but my diamonds. I shall sell them and go with my children to Martinique, where my mother possesses a plantation. I was there when a child, and still remember the island with pleasure. It is doubtless a hard lot to be obliged to leave my country, my mother, and my friends, but in the presence of great events we must have great courage. I shall educate my children carefully, and that will be my consolation."

Mademoiselle de Cochelet shed tears of emotion as she bowed to the Queen, and asked permission to accompany her, imploring it so earnestly that Hortense at last granted her wish. They agreed that Louisa should proceed to Paris, to make, with all possible secrecy, the necessary preparations for the voyage of the Queen. Mademoiselle set out accordingly on the following day, accompanied by a courier.

What a terrible change meanwhile had been going on at Paris! The capital presented a frightful picture! The gates were guarded by Cossacks, and in the streets nothing could be seen but Russian, Austrian, or Prussian uniforms, frequently in the company of the ladies of the Faubourg St Germain. These Royalists now enjoyed their triumph, and in their ecstasy treated the conquerors of France with the same devoted affection they were about to bestow on the Bourbons, who were to return within a few days.

Hortense's former hôtel was occupied by a Swedish regiment of foot. All the servants had fled. The brilliant and elegant reception-rooms now served to lodge the soldiery of a victorious enemy. At the Tuileries preparations were being made for the reception of the King.

Nobody dared to pronounce the name of Napoleon. Those who once had flattered him most were the first to desert him; those on whom he had bestowed the greatest kindnesses were most ready to condemn him, that they might, as they thought,

cause the benefits they had received from him to be forgotten. The most enthusiastic Napoleonists suddenly turned zealous Royalists, and stuck the largest white cockades on their hats, the better to attract the attention of the new masters of France.

But there was one man who still loved and admired the fallen Cæsar, and openly manifested the esteem he felt for him. This was Alexander, the Emperor of Russia.

He loved Napoleon so much, that even the political enmity, which had been forced upon him, was unable to extinguish his feelings of friendship and admiration for the hero who for so many years had been the master of Europe.

Napoleon's fate had already been sealed. To the generous efforts of the Czar alone he was indebted for compliance on the part of the allies with his wish, that the island of Elba should be given to him as a sovereign kingdom. Alexander could do no more for him, but turning to the Emperor's family, he endeavoured to be useful to them.

The Empress Maria Louisa had no need of his assistance; she had not availed herself of the permission of the allies to follow her husband to Elba, but had placed herself and her son under the protection of her father, the Emperor of Austria.

Alexander therefore bestowed all his sympathy on Napoleon's first wife, and her two children, the Viceroy of Italy and the Queen of Holland. His interest in the Queen was so great, that he said he

was resolved to visit Hortense at Navarre (if she should refuse to come to Paris), in order that he might hear from her own lips in what manner he could be useful to her, and how she should like to see her fate decided.

The Emperor's minister, Nesselrode, was anxious to preserve these benevolent feelings in the breast of his master, and no one was more anxious to serve the Queen than he. Count Nesselrode, who had for a long time been intimately acquainted with Mademoiselle de Cochelet, wishing to give this lady proof of his sincerity, well knew that the best way of doing so would be by endeavouring to assist Hortense and her children. Mademoiselle de Cochelet acquainted her friend with the Queen's intention of leaving France and emigrating to Martinique. The Count smiled sadly on hearing this desperate resolution of a brave maternal heart, and commissioned Mademoiselle to beg the Queen to let him know all her wishes and demands, in order that he might communicate them to the Emperor.

The sympathy with Hortense's fate was general. In one of the conferences held by the ministers of the allies, where the fate of France and that of the Bourbons and the Napoleonists was to be decided, the question was asked, What should be done for the family of the Emperor? The Prince of Benevento said:

"I plead for Queen Hortense alone; she is the only one I esteem in the Imperial family."

Count Nesselrode added:

"Who would not be proud to call her his countrywoman? She is a pearl to France!"

Even Metternich had praises for her.

However, neither the favourable reports of Mademoiselle de Cochelet, nor her remonstrances and entreaties, could induce the Queen to come to Paris. She was not to be prevailed upon to leave her place of retirement.

May we be allowed to cite one of the letters which Hortense wrote to Mademoiselle de Cochelet on this subject? It will serve to illustrate the noble and truly woman-like feelings of the Queen.

This letter runs as follows:

"My dear Louise,

"All my friends ask me the same question as yourself: What do you wish? what do you want? and to every one of them I reply as I do to you, 'I want nothing.' For what should I wish? Is my fate not already settled? And, besides, a woman who has the courage to take a great resolution, who boldly faces the idea of a voyage to India or America, what need has she to ask anything from any one? Pray do not take any steps I should be obliged to disown. I know you love me, and that might carry you away, but if you look at it closely I am not so very much to be pitied after all. I suffered much in the midst of that splendour I have lost, and perhaps I shall now at last find that rest which is far preferable to the proud bustle that once surrounded me. I do not think I can remain in France, for the

lively interest the people take in my fate might beget suspicion. This thought is depressing, I feel it. But never fear, I shall not bring any one into trouble. My brother will be happy enough, and my mother can remain in France, and in possession of her estates. I shall go abroad with my children, and as the happiness of those I love will then be secured, I shall very well be able to bear a misfortune that only affects my position, not my heart. I am still trembling and quite confused, from what I heard of the fate of the Emperor and his family. So it is really true? All is settled already? Do write me all about it! I hope they will at least leave me my children; if *they* should be taken from me, my heart would fail me. I will educate them in such a manner that they shall feel happy in all situations of life I will teach them to bear greatness or misfortune with equal dignity, and to find true happiness in being satisfied with themselves. That is more precious than all the crowns of the world. They are quite well, I am thankful to say. Please to thank Nesselrode for the interest he takes in me. I assure you there are days which must be called unhappy ones, but which yet possess a peculiar charm, I mean those during which one is enabled to see the true feelings of others towards oneself. I enjoy the affection you show me, and it shall always give me pleasure to tell you how much I return it.

"HORTENSE."

Hortense remained with her mother at the castle

of Navarre. She was determined not to issue from the obscurity of her retirement, but continued to bewail the fall of the Imperial house, and felt almost indifferent about her own future.

Her friends, however, thought and acted for her; for Hortense had friends in her misfortune even. Mademoiselle de Cochelet, the most zealous and devoted in her attachment to the Queen, was restlessly endeavouring to save some valuables out of the wreck of Imperial France.

This lady was still in Paris. The letters she wrote daily to the Queen, in which she related everything that passed in the capital, are a faithful and interesting picture of that strange and unsettled time, and it would be wrong not to quote some of them.

In one of her first letters she relates a conversation she had with Count Nesselrode concerning the fate of the Queen.

"The Bourbons," she writes, "there is no longer any doubt, will return. I asked Count Nesselrode, from whom I have just returned, 'whether the Queen would be allowed to remain in France. Will the new masters approve of it?'

"'Surely,' he replied, 'I am certain of it, for we shall make it one of our conditions, and without us they can never hope to reign. It is not the Bourbons, it is we, it is Europe, who manage matters in France. *I trust* they will never violate the treaty. You may rest assured that the Emperor Alexander will always uphold the just cause.'

"All the strangers here speak with great enthusiasm of you, Madame. Monsieur de Metternich, who doubtless remembers the great kindness you showed his wife and children, has repeatedly inquired after you. Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg feels the most devoted affection for you and the Empress Josephine, wishing nothing so much as to be able to serve you both. Count Nesselrode is of opinion that it would be well if you were to write to the Emperor Alexander. He takes great interest in your personal welfare.

"The old nobility are already very much dissatisfied. They believe themselves *encanaillés* at seeing so many new elements mixed with them."

A few days afterwards Mademoiselle de Cochelet writes:

"Come to Malmaison with the Empress Josephine; the Czar will go and see you there, without delay. He is impatient to make your acquaintance, and you ought to feel a little indebted to him, since he takes care of your interests as if they were his own. The Duke of Vicenza, who behaves so nobly in this crisis, has commissioned me to tell you that the happiness of your children depends on your coming to Malmaison.

"The Emperor Napoleon has signed a treaty, which settles the fate of his family. They are all allowed to remain in France, and their titles are left them. You have for yourself and your children an annuity of 400,000 francs.

"It is said that the Faubourg St Germain is

furious about the Imperial family being so well provided for. They do not show themselves very grateful for the kindnesses they have received at the hands of the Emperor.

"You wish to go and live in Switzerland? Count Nesselrode thinks it is no bad idea. That country was always a good place of retirement, but he is of opinion that you ought not to give up the asylum you have found here. At all events you must preserve yourself the right of returning to France.

"Just fancy, Madame, Count Nesselrode wants me to see his Emperor. I have not yet consented, because I do not like to do anything without your sanction; however, I confess I should like to make his acquaintance. They speak so much good of you! I am quite happy to hear it.

"Count Nesselrode said to me yesterday: 'Tell the Queen that I shall be happy to fulfil all her wishes, and that I am able to do it. I have sufficient power.' He would like to make, for your additional protection, a particular clause independent of the treaty I mentioned. I do not know what to answer, you must advise me, but I entreat you ask for something."

The Queen, however, answered this letter by simply sending one for the Emperor Napoleon, begging Count Nesselrode to forward it to its address.

"It is strange," writes Mademoiselle de Cochelet in reference to it, "that all my efforts to serve you have no other result than your begging Count

Nesselrode to forward to Fontainebleau a letter addressed to the Emperor. At first he thought I was bringing him the letter for his master for which he had begged. But he knows how to appreciate all that is noble and great. He possesses a wonderfully delicate tact, and thinks that the letter cannot well be transmitted to the Emperor by him. He will send it to Fontainebleau, addressed to the Duke of Vicenza, who is to give it to Napoleon."

Another letter of Mademoiselle de Cochelet's runs as follows:—

"I have just seen Count Nesselrode. He inquired after you. The Emperor of Russia has taken up his quarters in the Elysée Bourbon. The Count told me an anecdote that circulates here, and relates to a scene which is said to have taken place between the Empress Maria Louisa and the kings, her brothers-in-law. They intended to lift her forcibly into a carriage, in order to continue her flight. She resisted, and the King of Westphalia is said to have become so angry as to beat her a little bit. She cried out for assistance, and General Caftarelli, who commanded the escort, came to her rescue. The next day she was made prisoner, and all the crown diamonds she carried with her were taken from her. It seems that being caught was just what she wanted.

"The allies are furious against the Duke of Bassano. I have taken his part, for you know how much attached I am to his wife.

"The Queen of Westphalia has arrived at Paris, and the Emperor Alexander, her cousin, immediately

went to see her. They think she will return to her father.

"The fate of your brother will assume a fortunate shape, but it is not quite settled yet. There are many intrigues at work regarding it, Count Nesselrode tells me. As regards the kingdom of Naples, no one speaks about it. From the details Nesselrode communicates to me concerning the last campaign, I can see that many of our ministers and generals are very guilty, and looked upon with contempt. He tells me that but a week previous to the fall of Paris, the allies did not think they would conquer us, and so late as the 10th of March they thought peace had been concluded with Prussia.

"Do not feel uneasy about the fate of the Emperor at Elba. Napoleon himself has chosen the island, though the allies would have preferred any other place.

"All the couriers who have lately arrived here have been stopped. Amongst the letters they brought, there was one from the Empress Maria Louisa to her husband. She informs him that her son was well and had slept soundly; but when he awoke, he cried and said he had dreamed of papa. They wanted to know what he had dreamed, but neither promises nor toys could make him speak. The Empress felt uneasy about it.

"There is a rumour afloat that one of the marshals had asked the Emperor Alexander what rank his wife should occupy at the new court. He then expressed his astonishment that the army had not been

consulted on the question of the Constitution. Alexander answered that he was accustomed to give orders to the army, but not to receive any from them.

"Prince Leopold lives in the same house with the Countess Tascher. His thoughts are continually occupied with you and your mother. He at least is not forgetful of the kindness you both have shown him. I understand he will speak to the Emperor of Russia, and then write to you.

"All your friends are of opinion that you ought to think of your children, and accept the lot they have shaped out here for you. Monsieur de Lavalette and the Duke of Vicenza share this opinion. You lose quite enough as it is, and you may fairly permit your conquerors to give back to you part of what they took from you, and what is your lawful property.

"All your friends demand is that you should come to Malmaison as soon as Napoleon has left Fontainebleau. I am assured that the Emperor Alexander would go to see you at Navarre if you should decline coming to Malmaison. You see the meeting is not to be avoided, and besides you ought to bear in mind that the fate of your children lies in your hand. In the treaty of Fontainebleau they have mentioned you together with your sons. This is a certain guarantee to you, and shows the high esteem every one feels for you. All are anxious to arrange matters so as to gladden your maternal heart.

"To the Emperor of Russia, above all, you are indebted for this protection. When the Duke of

Vicenza laid this treaty before Napoleon to receive his signature, the Emperor expressed his full approbation. Thus your unconditional right over your children has been acknowledged, and nothing but your consent is wanted to offer you assistance. You have no right to reject the gifts offered to your sons. I think very few would prove so difficult to persuade into an acceptance of kindnesses.

"Madame Tascher, who proves herself so faithful a relation to you, has been to see the Duke of Dalberg, who is one of the members of the provisional government. She turned the conversation to you, and I will give you the Duke's answer literally. 'We consider her as not at all belonging to the family of the Bonapartes, for she has separated from her husband. She will be the support of her children; it is well they have been left her. She might be very happy, beloved and esteemed as she is. She can remain in France and do whatever she pleases; but it is necessary she should now come to Paris.'

"As soon as the Countess had left the Duke of Dalberg, she came to tell me the substance of their conversation.

"Now you know what friend and enemy think about you. Those who do not rejoice in the favour shown to you are wicked people. Almost every one says, 'As to the Queen, what has she to regret? The good she has done? Now, at last, people will dare to love her and say so. Her wishes are so modest, she is so gentle!'

"You see it seems as if they considered it advan-

tageous to you to have fallen from your height. They think your personal merits will now stand out to full advantage. 'Her value lies in herself,' they say; 'she will appear much greater without the encumbrance of a court.'

"Yesterday I saw the gentlemen who have just arrived from Fontainebleau, Messieurs de Lascour and de Lavoestine. They called on me to know where they might find you. They mean to join you immediately, either at Navarre or Malmaison. You will find them two devoted knights.

"'It does not matter what becomes of her,' they say, 'we shall at all events be enabled to show our attachment, and have the advantage of not being accused of hypocrisy.'

"This last fortnight has been an interesting one to Fontainebleau. All these young men wished to accompany the Emperor, even Messieurs Labedoyère and Montesquieu. The Emperor, however, has declined their offer, and in dismissing them said, 'They ought never to cease serving France zealously."

"Lascour and Lavoestine, as well as a great many other officers, are very angry with the generals who left Fontainebleau without taking leave of the Emperor.

"There is a rumour of the Emperor's having said, when speaking of Josephine, 'She was right, my giving her up has brought me bad luck.'

"They say that the Duchess of Montebello is going to leave the Empress Maria Louisa."

Entreaty and flattery proved ineffectual to curb

the noble pride of the Queen; her resolution was not to be shaken. She was still of opinion that she was playing a more dignified part in staying away from Paris, where the ladies of the Faubourg St Germain were celebrating with foreign officers the victory of Royalism.

Instead of complying with the wishes of Mademoiselle de Cochelet, the Queen wrote the following letter:

"My dear Louisa,

"You are dissatisfied with my resolution. You all accuse me of being childishly obstinate. You treat me unjustly. My mother can follow the advice of the Duke of Vicenza, she may go to Malmaison, but I shall REMAIN HERE. I have good reasons for doing so. I cannot separate my cause from that of my children. It is they and their nearest relations who are the sufferers in everything that is done. I will therefore keep aloof from those who overthrow our fortune. The more patiently I bear these blows of fate, which have changed my whole situation (and perhaps made it a more peaceful one), the less must I show it. I must be affected by our misfortune, and will appear to be so, without approaching those who would consider me a suppliant, even were I not to ask for anything.

"I believe you, that the Emperor of Russia wishes me well. I have heard much that is to his advantage, even from Napoleon, but if formerly I was desirous of making his acquaintance, I dislike iu this

moment the very idea of seeing him. Is he not our vanquisher? All your friends must in their heart applaud my resolution, whatever they may say. Retirement and solitude alone become me. After having been with your friends sufficiently long you will return to me. Then, perhaps, I shall go to a watering-place, for my chest is very weak. I do not know whether it is the fault of the air of Navarre, but since I have been here I can hardly breathe. People here think that the great events with their exciting influence are the cause of it, but they are mistaken. Death has spared us all, and the loss of a lofty station in life is not the greatest trial a person can experience. What happiness have I lost? My brother, I hope, will be properly treated. Henceforth he will no longer be exposed to danger. He must feel very uneasy on our score. I dare not write to him, for my letters would be intercepted. If you should have occasion to see him, tell him that we are no longer in danger. Adieu! I command you once more not to do anything for me. I fear your liveliness and your affection, and yet I like to rely on them. My children are perfectly well. My mother opposes all my plans, but nevertheless I shall go to her, who is still more unhappy than we are.

"HORTENSE."

She who in the opinion of Hortense was still more unhappy, was Napoleon's wife, Maria Louisa, who had now left Blois, the seat of the Regency, and gone to Rambouillet, there to wait until the allies

should have decided her fate and that of her son. In this eventful time it was certainly not the least surprising spectacle to see almost all the sovereigns of Europe, as well as the ex-rulers of France, and those who were about to re-assume the government of that country, collected within the narrow circle of Paris and its immediate neighbourhood. In the Tuileries there was a Bourbon, Bonaparte was at Fontainebleau, his wife and son at Rambouillet, the divorced Empress was staying at Navarre, while the Emperors of Russia and Austria, as well as the King of Prussia, had taken up their quarters in Paris. Besides these there were to be found a number of petty German sovereigns, and the Napoleonistic kings and dukes, who all lived in the capital or its neighbourhood.

The Queen of Holland thought it her duty, in these days of danger and anxiety, to repair to the side of her whom Napoleon had wished to be looked upon as the head of the family. Desiring therefore to be faithful to Maria Louisa, she resolved to go to Rambouillet, where the Empress was then staying.

This resolution filled the friends of the Queen with sorrow. As soon as Mademoiselle de Cochelet had received Hortense's letter which contained this information, she hastened to write in reply, beseeching her to desist from her purpose. Monsieur de Marmold, Hortense's equerry, undertook to be the bearer of this letter, and immediately set out to meet the Queen at Louis, where she meant to stop for the night. This gentleman intended to re-

present to his mistress the consternation of all her friends, and to unite his entreaties with those of Mademoiselle de Cochelet to dissuade Hortense from going to Rambouillet.

Mademoiselle de Cochelet wrote as follows:

"Monsieur de Marmold brings you this letter, if he be in time to meet you at Louis. If you go to Rambouillet you will destroy all your prospects, and those of your children. This is the painful conviction of all your friends.

"I was so glad; for Prince Leopold had written to you in the name of Alexander to beg you to come to Malmaison. You could not but have accepted this invitation, since he was willing even to go and see you at Navarre. But instead of returning with the Empress Josephine, you go to join a family who have never sent for you. You will experience nothing but disappointment, and no one will thank you for the sacrifice you think you owe them. You certainly will repent that step, but not until it is too late. I beseech you, I ask it as a favour, do not go to Rambouillet.

"Those whom you are going to see will be indifferent to your devotion, whilst the allies will hear of your step with displeasure.

"The Empress is thoroughly Austrian; they take care she does not see anybody belonging to her husband's family. I tell you this in the name of Prince Leopold and of Madame de Caulaincourt. The latter, in spite of her old age, will go to you if

you refuse much longer to join us. She has charged me to say that she beseeches you not to proceed to Rambouillet. As your lady of honour, and in virtue of her being the friend of your mother, she even commands you to desist from doing it.

"When I informed Prince Leopold of your intention to join Maria Louisa, tears started to his eyes. 'It is all very well to be proud,' he said, 'but she cannot draw back now. She is already under obligation to the Emperor of Russia, who is the author of the treaty of the 11th of April. I expect her answer, to give it to the Emperor. She owes him an answer.'

"I have spent an hour with Monsieur de Lavalette this morning. This excellent man knew nothing of the efforts we are making to induce you to return. He said to me, 'How well it would be for her and her children, if Alexander should wish to see her.' O come! do come! You must grant this as a favour to your friends. We should all despair if you were to go to Rambouillet.

"Prince Leopold intends writing you a few lines. He really could not take more interest in you or the Empress Josephine if he were a brother or a son. Count Tschernitscheff came to see me. To-morrow the Emperor of Austria will arrive. The new French princes and the King will soon be here as well! What a change!

"You really must see the Emperor of Russia; he wishes it so much. I implore you on my knees

to show me that favour. This Alexander behaves so nobly that he commands every one's esteem. We forget he is our victor, and look upon him as a protector only. He seems to be the helper of those who have lost everything. His conduct is exemplary. He only receives visitors on business-matters. The fair ladies of the Faubourg St Germain cannot boast that he seeks them very much. This speaks highly for him, for they say he is very fond of ladies. He told Prince Leopold that he intended going to Navarre. 'You know I love and esteem that family,' he added; 'Eugène is the very model of chivalry. I admire the bearing of Josephine, Queen Hortense, and Eugène. It is infinitely nobler than that of many others who ought to have exhibited greater devotion towards the Emperor.' Can you wonder at my liking the man who shows so much nobility of character? I hope you will soon be able to judge for yourself. For God's sake, return!

"LOUISA."

All these entreaties were in vain. Monsieur de Marmold met the Queen in Louis, and gave her the letter, adding all he could to induce her not to go to Rambouillet. Hortense's resolution remained unshaken.

"You are right," she answered. "Every word you say is true—yet I shall, nevertheless, go to the Empress. It is my duty. If difficulties should arise out of it, I shall disregard them; I shall think

of nothing but my duty. Maria Louisa must be more unhappy than all of us. She stands most in need of consolation, at Rambouillet therefore I shall be most useful. Nothing can alter my resolution."

CHAPTER XXI.

QUEEN HORTENSE AND THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER.

Queen Hortense, in spite of the entreaties of her friends, went to Rambouillet. Maria Louisa received her with embarrassment, and told her she expected her father, the Emperor of Austria, who, she feared, would not like her presence. Besides, the young Empress, although sad and downcast, did not appear so much affected by the Emperor's downfall as had been expected by Hortense. Her husband's melancholy fate had not wounded her heart so deeply as it had that of Josephine.

Hortense felt she was not wanted, and saw the presence of the Austrian Emperor would be quite sufficient to console the Empress of France. Her thoughts turned to Josephine, who had been so deeply affected by Napoleon's misfortune; and as she found she was an embarrassment to Maria Louisa, instead of a consolation, she hastened to free her of her presence.

Now at last Hortense bent her proud neck, and yielded to the wishes and petitions of her friends and her mother, who had returned to Malmaison. She

went to Paris. They had told her so often that the interest of her sons demanded her presence at the capital, that she overcame her reluctance, and in complying with their wishes considered she was performing a duty.

So she went for several days to Paris, where she stayed at her former hôtel, whose desolate solitude reminded her with awful eloquence of the greatness she had lost.

Those rooms which once had been the meeting-place of kings and princes stood empty, bearing on their soiled parquets the footmarks of the hostile soldiery who for some time had occupied the Queen's palace. By order of the Czar the Swedes had left it, but none of the servants had returned. Cowardly and ungratefully they had turned away from their sun, as it sank, and fled before the storm that shattered Hortense's crown.

When Alexander, informed of the arrival of the Queen, hastened to see her at her house, Hortense received him in the ante-room alone.

"Sire," she said, with a melancholy smile, "I have no one left to receive you with the customary ceremonies. My reception-rooms are deserted." The sight of this helpless woman, of this Queen without crown or subjects, without followers or pretensions, but who, nevertheless, stood before him in all the loveliness of womanly pride, and with a smile on her lips, made a deep impression on the Emperor, and tears rushed into his eyes.

The Queen saw it, and hastened to add,—

"But what does it matter? I do not think ante-chambers, filled with laced liveries, can make those who come to see me happier. And as to myself, I am proud to receive you. So you see I am a gainer by the change."

"Alas!" the Emperor said, "I am partly the cause of this sudden change in your fortunes, and cannot console myself for it; but at any rate allow me to arrange your existence in the manner most pleasing to yourself. You love France, you have friends here, and must desire to remain; allow me to settle matters so that this may be effected."

"Do not speak about that," the Queen said, "we must follow destiny under all circumstances."

"Certainly," the Emperor continued, "I can no longer offer you a crown, but I wish you to hold an independent position in your own country, near your mother."

The Queen interrupted him, "I cannot at present remain with propriety in France, and must have the courage to regard at once the most painful side of my position."

"No!" the Emperor exclaimed, "you belong to your mother, and, besides, do you imagine that we, who are giving a crown to the Bourbons, will not insist on them respecting those with whom we have formed an alliance, and whom we ourselves respect? With the Emperor Napoleon there was no longer a hope of peace; but while rendering him powerless to do us injury, we do not the less recognize that he is a great man, whom I loved as a friend, and who

wounded me to the heart by breaking our treaties; but I do not the less desire to know him happy as well as his family. I was for a Regency, and especially for the country being consulted; but my colleagues eagerly recalled the Bourbons, without any guarantee. All the worse for the French if they are injured by it; they desired it, and not I. I will always cause your family to be respected. You see by the treaties that they can reside in France, or wherever they please. If Russia agreed with you, I should be only too happy to offer you a palace; but you would find our climate too severe for your delicate health, and in offering it I should not think sufficiently of you. You are so beloved in France! Why will you not remain in it? Everywhere I hear nothing but praises of you, even among those who appear enemies of your family: remain then where you are comfortable. You must arrange your existence here; it will not be worthy of you, but you will live tranquilly among your friends with your children. I know that is your sole desire, so let us settle the manner in which your position should be arranged. Mademoiselle, come here, and persuade the Queen to tell me what I can do for her."

The Emperor forced Mademoiselle de Cochelet to express her opinion, and she pleaded in his presence the interest of the Queen's children, for she knew that was her most sensitive side. She told the Queen she ought to think of them, that by keeping them in their own country she would leave them among their friends, while their name would probably be regarded everywhere as that of an enemy; she added, that the

Queen, for their sake, could not refuse the Emperor's kindness, and that since through their mother they could have a destiny, a fortune, and a country, she would be culpable if she opposed it by refusing so obstinately.

The Queen gave a deep sigh, and tears stood in her eyes; but at last overcoming her emotion, she said to the Emperor:

"I am really touched, sire, by the interest you testify in me; you wish to force me to have obligations toward you; but am I not already too greatly indebted? Up to the present I had made up my mind to misfortune, I felt resigned: I never thought anything fortunate could happen to me, so I know not what to ask; still I am resolved not to accept anything unbecoming either myself or my children."

"Very well, then, trust to me," the Emperor said, and soon after left the room.

The same evening Hortense remained at home with her brother, and the Duke de Vicenza and Madame du Cayla joined them. The Emperor Alexander, who knew that the Queen would not return to Malmaison till the next morning, came to drink tea with her. He seemed considerably embarrassed on seeing Madame du Cayla, for he had fled from a brilliant party where every effort was made to keep him, and was not pleased at meeting a person who could tell how unceremoniously he had treated her society, as, instead of the business he had made an excuse of, he had come to repose with the brother and sister whom

that society feared so greatly. Hence he said nothing to Madame du Cayla, but conversed with the Queen and the Duke de Vicenza.

On the other hand, Prince Eugène, with that moderate and frank tone that renders all disunion impossible, conversed with Madame du Cayla in a manner that embarrassed her cruelly; in spite of all her wit she knew not how to answer him.

"I can conceive," the Prince said, "one dynasty being preferred to another; women especially do not inquire which system is more useful to their country, for they are guided by their affections; but, in the presence of an enemy, to forget themselves as well-bred ladies and French women, to go and meet a foreign army, fête it, and embrace it while still covered with French blood! Ah, Madame, tell me that you had lost your head, and then I could understand it."

"Why," Madame du Cayla said, "we did not go to meet enemies, they became our friends by restoring us the sovereigns we always loved."

"'They were the enemies of France," Prince Eugène replied; "your sovereigns must not desire to separate themselves from the country they are once more called upon to govern: and you compromised them, seeking a support in the conqueror, while the conquered are your brothers."

"Still," Madame du Cayla said with a smile, "we might not have succeeded in getting our kings back without that: the end justifies the means: and be assured that had it not been for us, and the demon-

strations which the people would not make, and which we made by becoming the people for the nonce, the sovereigns would not have declared themselves; we gained our cause at the expense of our persons."

"It is pleasant to me," the Prince retorted, "to have your assurance that the people counted for nothing in these acclamations, and that the Bourbons are solely indebted to you young and pretty ladies for their crown."

Malmaison, whither, after a short stay in Paris, Hortense returned, and where Josephine was also living, became a sort of sociable meeting-place of the sovereigns then assembled in the capital. Every one of these kings and princes was anxious to show his respect to the fallen Empress and her daughter, and thus testify the esteem they still felt for Napoleon.

One day the King of Prussia and his two sons, Frederick William and William, announced their intention to visit Malmaison. The Empress Josephine sent them an invitation for dinner, and asked Alexander and his two brothers to join them.

The Emperor accepted the invitation. When he and the young Grand-Dukes entered the drawing-room, where the Duchess of St Leu was present at the time, he took the princes by the hand, and introducing them to Hortense, said:

"Madam, I give my two brothers into your charge; they appear in the world for the first time. My mother is afraid the fair French ladies will turn their

heads. But perhaps I am fulfilling my promise to watch over them very badly in bringing them to Malmaison, where so many beautiful ladies are assembled."

"Fear nothing," the Queen replied with gravity, "I will be their Mentor, and promise you to watch over them with the eye of a mother."

The Emperor laughed, and pointing to Hortense's two sons, who had just entered the room, said:

"Madam, it would be better for my brothers if they were no older than these boys."

He approached the children, and in shaking hands addressed them with the titles of "Monseigneur" and "Imperial Highness."

The boys looked up to him with astonishment, for the Russian Emperor was the first who had addressed little Napoleon and his brother with these proud titles. Their mother, the Queen, had never suffered their attendants to call them otherwise than by their Christian names, wishing to preserve them from vain pride in their exalted rank, and to teach them to derive importance from themselves only.

Shortly afterwards the King of Prussia and his sons were announced, and the Emperor left the children to meet them.

Whilst Alexander and the King saluted each other, Hortense's sons inquired of their governess who the gentlemen were that had just entered.

"It is the King of Prussia," whispered the lady, "and the gentleman who is now speaking to him is the Emperor of Russia."

Little Louis Napoleon looked for an instant attentively at the tall figures of the foreign potentates, whose proud names did not at all seem to awe him, for he had been accustomed to see kings in his mother's drawing-room.

"Mademoiselle," he said after a little pause, "are these two gentlemen our uncles as well? Must we call them so?"

"No, Louis, you must call them Sire."

"But why are they not our uncles?"

The governess withdrew with the children into a corner of the room, and told them that the King of Prussia and Alexander, far from being their uncles, were their conquerors.

"Then they are the enemies of our uncles?" Louis Napoleon asked angrily. "Why did this Emperor of Russia embrace me?"

"Because he is a generous enemy. Without his assistance you would possess nothing in the world, and the fate of your uncles would be still worse than it is already."

"Then we must be fond of that Emperor there?" asked the little boy.

"Certainly, for you owe him much."

The young prince made no reply, but he cast a penetrating look at the Emperor, who at the moment was speaking with Josephine.

When, on the day after this conversation, Alexander again came to Malmaison and was sitting by the side of the Queen in the summer-house, little Louis Napoleon approached him noiselessly and behind his

back, put something glittering in the Emperor's hand, and hastily ran away.

The Queen called him back, and asked in a severe tone what he had done?

The little Prince returned hesitatingly, with his eyes bent to the ground, and said with a blush:

"Oh, mamma, it was the ring Uncle Eugène gave me. I wanted to make the Emperor a present of it, because he is so kind to you."

Alexander drew little Louis Napoleon to him, and, greatly moved, placed him on his lap.

He complied with the boy's wish to accept the ring. Fastening it to his watch-chain, he vowed that he would carry this keepsake about with him as long as he lived.

CHAPTER XXII.

DEATH OF THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE.

Since Napoleon's star had gone down, and he had been obliged to leave France as an exile, Josephine's life seemed as if darkened by a cloud of deep melancholy. She felt that the night of her fortunes had appeared, but she carefully concealed this feeling within her bosom; no tear, no sigh, revealed to her affectionate daughter how much she suffered. She only lamented the Emperor's fate, and the misfortune of her children and grandsons. She seemed to have

forgotten her own melancholy lot, and apparently wished nothing for herself. With the same easy grace that had distinguished her in former years, she performed the honours of her house at Malmaison, and in the society of the foreign princes showed a composure that was a stranger to her heart.

She would have preferred remaining alone with her sorrow in the interior of her palace, had she not thought that the welfare of her daughter and grandsons required her presence in society. The affectionate mother undertook to do that to which the proud Hortense was unable to stoop ; she begged Alexander to have compassion on the Queen and her children.

Hence, so soon as the Czar had succeeded in obtaining the title-deeds which secured Hortense the Duchy of St Leu, he hastened to Malmaison to apprize the Empress of his success.

Josephine thanked him, not with words, but with tears, and grasping his hand, she begged him with charming simplicity to accept a keepsake from her.

The Emperor pointed to a cup on which Josephine's portrait was painted, and asked to be allowed to take it.

"No, sire," she said, "such a cup you may buy anywhere. I wish to give you something which is not to be found anywhere else, and which sometimes will make you think of me. It is a present which I received from Pope Pius VII. on the day of my coronation. You have this day brought my daughter a ducal coronet, and I will show my gratitude by giving you this present, which will remind you at

once of mother and daughter—of the fallen Empress and the fallen Queen."

The present which Josephine now handed over to the Emperor was an antique cameo of enormous size, of such beautiful and masterly workmanship that the Empress was fully justified in saying that nothing better of the kind could be found.

On this cameo were represented, side by side, the heads of Alexander the Great and his father Philip of Macedonia. The perfection of the workmanship, as well as the size of the gem, made it extremely valuable. Alexander, therefore, at first declined to accept this truly princely present, and only complied with the Empress's wishes when he saw that his refusal offended her. The Empress appeared that day unusually pale and excitable. She had reason to be sad. The Bourbons had pierced her heart with another arrow. Josephine had read in the newspapers an article which spoke in the most cruel and contemptuous terms of the Queen of Holland's eldest son being buried in Notre Dame, adding that the minister Blacas had given orders for the removal of the body thence, in order to be interred in one of the public churchyards.

Hortense, who had read this article, hastened to Paris to claim the remains of the child for whom she had wept so much, and to deposit them in the church of St Leu.

Josephine trembled as she told the Emperor of this new insult, and a deadly paleness covered her cheek.

For the first time the strength failed her to conceal her sufferings. Hortense was absent, and she might allow herself the consolation of banishing the artificial smile and colour from her lip, and showing her face as it was, already marked by the hand of approaching death.

"Your Majesty is ill!" exclaimed the Emperor.

Josephine, with a smile that brought tears into Alexander's eyes, pointed to her heart and whispered:

"It is here, sire, I have received the fatal stab."

She was but too right. Her heart had indeed been fatally wounded.

The Emperor, startled by the appearance of Josephine, immediately hastened to Paris, and sent his own physician to Malmaison to receive information about the state of her health. When the physician returned he told the Emperor that she was dangerously ill, and to all appearance past recovery.

He was right. Alexander never saw the Empress again.

Hortense and Eugène spent a melancholy night at the bedside of their mother. They employed the most skilful physicians, but they all confirmed the Russian's opinion that the state of the patient was hopeless. Josephine died broken-hearted. With a strong hand she had held that heart together as long as her life was useful to her children, but now that Hortense's fate had been sealed she took her hand off, and—bled to death.

The Empress Josephine died on the 29th of March,

1814, after an illness which apparently only lasted two days. Hortense did not hear her last sigh. When she entered the sick-room after the Abbé Bertrand had administered the last sacrament to the dying Empress, who stretched out her arms and tried in vain to speak to her children, grief overpowered her daughter, and she sank senseless to the ground. Josephine died in the arms of her son.

The news of the Empress's death made a deep impression on the Parisians. It seemed as if the capital had forgotten that Napoleon was no longer the sovereign of France, and that the Bourbons had returned to the throne of their fathers. Every one was sad, every one bewailed Josephine; the hearts of the French nation preserved the memory of the woman who had been a benefactress to many, and of whom each one was enabled to remember some act of benevolence or generosity.

Josephine, when dead, was once more to receive homage from thousands. Multitudes went to Malmaison to see "the Empress" for the last time. Even the Faubourg St Germain participated in the general regret. The proud, overbearing Royalists, who had returned with the Bourbons, remembered, perhaps, the kindnesses they had received from her, while she was still on the throne, and expended one half of her income in relieving exiles. On returning to France along with King Louis they had forgotten to thank their benefactress;

but now that she was dead, they could not help esteeming and admiring her.

"What an interesting woman that incomparable Josephine was!" said Madame du Cayla, the particular friend of the King, "what fine tact, what kindness and moderation, she possessed. Her very dying, just now, is a proof of her good taste."

Eugène took Hortense from her mother's death-bed almost by force, and immediately after Josephine had breathed her last. She went with her brother and children to St Leu. The Empress's two grandsons were the only members of her family who followed the coffin when she was buried at Malmaison. Grief had thrown her two children on sick-beds. Behind the little princes, Napoleon and Louis Napoleon, came the Russian General de Sacken, who represented his Emperor, and the carriages of all the kings and potentates by whom Napoleon had been dethroned.

The last night Alexander of Russia passed on French soil, before starting for England, he spent at St Leu. In taking leave of Eugène and Hortense, who on that occasion left her room for the first time, he assured them both of his sincere and unchangeable friendship. Knowing that the ambassador he left at Paris, Pozzo di Borgo,* was an inveterate enemy of Napoleon and his family, he gave him Baron Boutiakin as an *attaché*, who was selected by Mademoiselle

* Pozzo di Borgo said on hearing the news of Napoleon's death at St Helena, "I did not kill him, but I threw the last handful of earth on his coffin, so that he could not rise again."

de Cochelet herself, and was to receive and forward the Queen's letters as well as those of her faithful companion.

A few days after, Eugène also left St Leu and his sister, to return with the King of Bavaria to his new home, Germany.

Hortense followed him with a melancholy eye as he departed. Now for the first time she felt how utterly lonely and forlorn she was.

She had shed no tears on falling from the exalted station she had once occupied, she had not complained when the hurricane of misfortune hurled the crowns of her relatives from their heads; on the contrary, she had smiled in the very midst of that storm, and offered her brow to the tempest, that it might sweep off her royal diadem; but now that she stood in the lonely halls of the castle of St Leu, alone and isolated, with no one by her side but her two little sons and a few faithful ladies, Hortense wept.

"Alas!" she exclaimed, stretching out her hands to Mademoiselle de Cochelet, "my courage is gone! My mother is dead, my brother has left me, Alexander will soon forget the promised protection, and then I shall have to struggle alone with my two children against the hostilities people will heap on me for the sake of the name I bear. I am afraid I shall have cause to repent not having carried out my former plan. Will the attachment I feel for my country make up for the sorrows I can foresee?"

The gloomy presentiments of the Queen were to be verified but too soon. In the hour of great misfor-

tune the mortal eye is gifted with the power of beholding coming events; but, like Cassandra, we behold them without being able to avert them.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE RETURN OF THE BOURBONS.

On the 12th of April the Count of Artois, who was the precursor of the King, and whom Louis XVIII. had nominated his lieutenant, made his entry into Paris. At the gate of the capital he was received by a newly-formed "provisional government," at the head of which stood Monsieur de Talleyrand. Artois's reply to this minister's speech was a short one.

"Nothing is changed in France," he said, "there is now one Frenchman more in this country."

The people received the King's lieutenant with cold curiosity. Troops of the allies lined his road to the Tuileries, where the ladies of the Faubourg St Germain, ornamented with white lilies and cockades, had prepared an enthusiastic welcome.

The Countess du Cayla, who afterwards became the noted favourite of the King, and who had been one of the principal instruments of his restoration, was the first to unfurl again the white standard of the Bourbons. Accompanied by a few of her friends, she appeared, a few days before the arrival of the

Prince, in the streets of Paris, and endeavoured to excite amongst the people some enthusiasm for the family of their legitimate master.

But the nation, as well as the army, still continued to preserve their old devotion to the Emperor, and it was with sullen indifference that they listened to the proclamations of Prince Schwarzenberg, read by Monsieur de Nauvineux. The Royalists, of course, shouted their "*Vive le Roi!*" but the mass of the people remained silent.

This gloomy silence terrified the Countess du Cayla, who felt it to be a token of secret discontent with the new order of things. She saw the necessity of animating and exciting the sullen crowd that they might show their sentiments and express them energetically. It had been vainly attempted to make the people enthusiastic by words: it remained to be seen whether a visible symbol would produce a greater effect. It was resolved to show them the standard of the Bourbons.

Madame du Cayla presented her pocket-handkerchief to her companion, begging him to wave it high in the air, and to display it the more effectually she tied it to Count Montmorency's stick. This was the first Royalist standard, which, after a period of twenty-six years, was again unfurled in the streets of Paris.

The Parisians beheld the ensign with something like apprehensive veneration; they did not hail it with acclamations or other tokens of joy; they continued to remain silent, but still they followed the

procession of the Royalists, who tumultuously proceeded to the Boulevards, shouting their enthusiastic "*Vive le Roi!*" They took no part in the demonstration, it is true, but neither did they do anything to prevent its taking place.

Meanwhile, the joy of the Royalists, and of the Royalist ladies in particular, attained such a height as almost to overstep the limits of decency. In the delirium of their fanatical loyalty they received the hostile troops of the allies in a manner that almost resembled a universal declaration of love on the part of the fair ones of St Germain. Labouring under a strange confusion of ideas, these soldiers, although undeniably enemies of France, appeared to them part and parcel of their beloved Bourbons, and they received them with an enthusiasm almost equal to that with which they greeted the returning family of their King. There was a period during which the hearts of these ladies belonged to every nation, their own countrymen excepted.

Louis XVIII. himself felt dissatisfied with the boundless enthusiasm of the Faubourg St Germain, and openly told the Countess du Cayla how ridiculous and undignified appeared to him the demeanour of the Royalist ladies on that occasion. He even expressed his belief that it might have been very injurious to his cause, considering that the nation had at the time not yet expressed their will.

"It would have been better," he said, "to observe an imposing reserve towards the allies, without any demonstration or show of affection. A dignified,

composed bearing would have inspired them with respect towards the nation, and they would not have left Paris impressed with the belief, which they entertained fifty years ago, that the French were the most frivolous and immoral of all nations. You, in particular, my ladies, have laid yourselves open to reproach in that respect. The allies, as a body, have appeared to you *en masse* so amiable that you have incurred the suspicion of having loved them *en détail*, and consequently there are rumours afloat which do not greatly honour the French ladies."

"Mais, mon Dieu!" the Countess du Cayla replied to her royal friend, "the ladies wished to show the allies their gratitude for being put in possession of your Majesty again. They have offered to the allies as a free gift what could not be obtained either by the tyrants of the Republic or by the heroes of the Empire; not one of us, I am sure, will regret what she has done for our good friends, the allies."

"What had been done for the good friends, the allies," nevertheless gave rise to much unpleasant misunderstanding; and those husbands that did not share the enthusiasm of their wives for the foreign warriors soon thought they had cause for complaint.

The Count de G * * *, among others, had married, a few days previous to the Restoration, a noble and handsome young lady. She herself, in her youthful carelessness, was utterly indifferent to the political crisis. Not so, however, her mother-in-law, father-in-law, and husband, who were Royalists of the purest water.

On the day when the allies entered Paris these three hastened like all other legitimists to welcome the "good friends," and each one returned with a stranger. The husband brought an Englishman, the mother-in-law a Prussian, and the father-in-law an Austrian.

All three zealously endeavoured to outshine each other in fêtes and festivities, given in honour of their friends, whose presence was considered a great cause of rejoicing. La petite Comtesse alone remained indifferent amidst the enthusiasm of her family, and thus incurred the reproach of taking too little interest in the good cause. She was exhorted to do "all she could," effectually to entertain the gallant soldiers who had restored to France her legitimate king.

Hence it came that the husband begged the Englishman to give the Comtesse a lesson in reading; the Marchioness had a particular wish that the Prussian should take her daughter-in-law to balls, in order to teach her the German mode of waltzing; while the Marquis, who had discovered that the Austrian was a great fancier of paintings, asked her to visit the picture-galleries with him.

In a word, they placed the young Marchioness in a position where it was easy to commit not only one, but three *faux pas;* for why should she display a preference for any one of her visitors?

But she was young, and but little experienced in such combinations, and thus it came to pass that her triple intrigue was speedily discovered by her family. Husband, mother-in-law, and father-in-law were be-

side themselves with anger. That was too much, even for the royalistic zeal of the legitimists, and they tumultuously reproached the youthful offender.

"I'm sure it is not my fault," the lady, amidst tears, exclaimed. "You wished it yourself. Didn't you tell me to do all I could to oblige the gentlemen; how then could I dare refuse them anything?"

But there were also cases in which the enthusiastic ladies of the Faubourg St Germain found themselves rejected by those to whom they offered themselves. Even the noble and proud Marchioness de M * * * experienced this affront. This lady placed herself in front of one of the gloomy and dissatisfied-looking regiments of the Imperial Guard, that had just allowed the Count of Artois to ride past their files in silence. She loudly called upon them to show their affection for the royal family, adding that she would belong to him who first shouted "*Vive le Roi!*" The faithful soldiers of the Emperor, however, remained unmoved by this promise, not one being willing to gain the offered prize; all were silent as before.

The princes who stood at the head of the allied armies were naturally the chief object of the ovations of the Royalists, although by them they were least appreciated. The Austrian Emperor was too much occupied with the future of his daughter and grandson, the King of Prussia too stern and serious to pay any attention to the coquetries of the Bourbonist ladies;

all whose affections and efforts were therefore directed towards Alexander, the youthful Emperor of Russia.

But here also their enthusiasm was but ill-requited. Alexander lived in a seclusion that almost seemed to imply want of confidence, and yet the noble ladies of the Faubourg St Germain decided the fate of France, by inducing him to give his vote to the family of the Bourbons. For a long time it remained undecided who was to occupy the vacant throne, for the person was not yet fixed upon to whom the allies should confide the reins of France.

It was the secret wish of the Emperor of Russia to raise the noble-minded and universally beloved Viceroy of Italy, Eugène Beauharnois, to the throne. The letter in which Eugène had answered the offer of the allies, when they tempted him with the duchy of Genoa, had procured Josephine's son the Czar's lasting esteem. Alexander himself had written to Eugène in the name of the allies, and promised him the duchy of Genoa if he would leave Napoleon's cause and join his enemies.

Eugène Beauharnois answered as follows:

"SIRE,

"I have read the proposals of your Majesty; they are doubtless very kind, but they cannot shake my resolution. I am afraid I managed to express my thoughts badly when I had the honour of seeing you, if your Majesty can believe for one moment that I am capable of selling my honour for any prize, however high it may be. Neither a duchy of Genoa, nor a

kingdom of Italy, can tempt me to treason. The example of the King of Naples does not seduce me; I would sooner be an honest soldier than a treacherous prince.

"The Emperor, you say, has wronged me. If so, I have forgotten it. I only remember his kindnesses. Everything I possess or am, I owe to him; my rank, my titles, my fortune, and, above all, what you kindly call my glory. Therefore, I am determined to serve him as long as I live. My heart and my arm are equally his. May my sword shiver in my hand if ever I draw it against the Emperor or my native country. I flatter myself that my well-founded refusal will at least secure me your esteem.

"I am, &c. &c."

The Emperor of Austria, on the other hand, wished his grandson, the King of Rome, to ascend the throne of France, and his mother to be at the head of the Regency during his minority. But he shrunk from asking his allies openly to adopt his plan, as he had promised to sanction everything they should think proper to do. In vain, therefore, did the Duke de Cadore, who had been sent by Maria Louisa from Blois to the allies to guard her interest, try to persuade her father to secure her son the throne of France.

Francis told his daughter's messenger that he thought he was justified in hoping much, but that he was incapable of gaining his point by force.

"I love my daughter," the Emperor said, "I love my son-in-law, and am ready to shed my blood for them."

"But, sire," the Duke de Cadore replied, "there is no necessity for such a sacrifice."

"I am ready to shed my blood for them," the Emperor continued, "to sacrifice my life; but I repeat, I have promised my allies to sanction everything they shall do, but to do nothing without their advice. My minister, Monsieur de Metternich, is even now at your house, and I shall ratify anything he has signed."

Secretly, however, the Emperor continued hoping that what Metternich was preparing for his signature, would prove the King of Rome's nomination to the throne of France.

The zeal of the Royalists was destined to blight this hope.

The Emperor of Russia had taken up his quarters in the hôtel of Monsieur de Talleyrand. He had yielded to the demonstrations and entreaties of the French diplomatist, who knew very well how much easier it would be to secure the services of this "Agamemnon of the Holy Alliance," if he could hold him at each hour and minute, as it were, in his hand. In hospitably receiving the Emperor of Russia, Talleyrand hoped to lead him captive, body and soul, and to be able to make the most of him.

Under these circumstances it was to Talleyrand that the Countess du Cayla hastened, in order to make

with the Bonapartist of yesterday, but the Royalist of to-day, the necessary preparations for the return of the Bourbons.

Talleyrand took upon himself to procure the Countess an audience of the Emperor, and was successful. In leading the fair lady to the Czar's room, he whispered in her ear :

"You had better imitate Madame de Semallé. Try to administer a heavy blow at once. The Emperor is gallant, as you know, and he may grant to the entreaties of a lady what he refuses to diplomacy."

The hint was not thrown away. Hardly had the Countess du Cayla been left alone, after entering the Emperor's room, ere she extended her arms beseechingly, and prostrated herself before him.

The Emperor hastened immediately to raise her in the politest manner.

"What are you doing?" he asked, almost frightened, "a noble lady should never bow the knee before a gentleman."

"Sire," the Countess replied, "I kneel before you because I am about to ask a favour of you, which no one else is capable of granting. It will be doubly a matter of rejoicing to see Louis XVIII. return, and to see him led back by Alexander I."

"It is true then that the French nation still revere the House of Bourbon ?"

"Yes, sire ! They are our only hope, to them alone our hearts belong."

"Oh, that is excellent," Alexander exclaimed; "and are all French ladies equally enthusiastic ?"

"Every French heart is beating for the Royal family!"

"Nay, if this be the case, if France herself recall the King, the legislative bodies may pronounce themselves, and all will be finished."

Now the Countess du Cayla was the very woman to bring about such a manifestation of opinion on the part of the "legislative bodies." She hastened to promulgate throughout Paris the Emperor's words, and on the evening following her interview with his Majesty she gave a grand soirée, to which the most distinguished ladies of her party and a great number of senators were invited.

"I wished," says the Countess in her Memoirs, "thus to tempt these gentlemen into a solemn promise. Silly woman that I was! Had not most of them taken and broken at least a dozen oaths?"

On the day following this soirée the senate, in an extraordinary sitting, proclaimed a provisional government, composed of Talleyrand, the Duke de Dalberg, the Marquis de Jancourt, Count Bournonville, and the Abbé Montesquieu. The senate, under the influence of these men, then proceeded to declare the Emperor Napoleon deprived of the throne, and proclaimed Louis XVIII. the new ruler of France. But whilst the senate were thus manifesting in solemn sitting their legitimistic sentiments, they at the same time showed clearly their utter want of principle and patriotic feeling. The senators, in an especial clause of the treaty with the returning King, stipulated that the customary salary should continue to be

paid to themselves as a pension for life. Thus this honourable body in recalling Louis XVIII. took good care to be rewarded for it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE BOURBONS AND THE NAPOLEONS.

The allies, without any further investigation, took the resolution of the senate for the voice of the people, and recalled Louis XVIII., who under the name of Count de Lille had suffered a protracted exile at Hartwell, to the throne of his fathers.

The Emperor of Austria kept his word. He did not object to the measures taken by the allies, but suffered his grandson, the King of Rome, to be deprived of his heritage, and consented to the Imperial diadem being taken from his daughter's brow. The Emperor Francis, however, was quite as much surprised at the unexpected turn matters had taken as Maria Louisa herself, for up to the occupation of Paris the allies had held out to him hopes that his daughter and grandson would be maintained in power.

The Emperor's disappointment gave occasion for a witty caricature, which on the day of Louis's entering Paris, was seen posted on the very walls on which was advertised Châteaubriand's enthusiastic pamphlet on the return of the Bourbons. In this caricature, of which thousands of copies were cir-

culated in the capital, the Emperor of Austria was seen in a handsome open carriage; Alexander, as coachman, was seated on the box; the Regent of England acted the part of a post-boy, and the King of Prussia, arrayed as a lacquey, stood behind. Napoleon, on foot, ran by the side of the carriage, calling out to the Emperor of Austria, "Look here, papa-in-law, they have kicked me out!" "And taken me in," was Francis's reply. Great was the rejoicing of the ladies of the Faubourg St Germain, when they were at last certain of again beholding their King, and they were but too willing to evince their gratitude to the Emperor of Russia. Alexander, however, appeared in this instance insensible to all their homage; he even avoided being present at the parties given by the new King in the Tuileries. *La haute volée* and all the assembled diplomacy were shocked to see the Emperor manifesting, thus openly, his sympathies for Napoleon's family, and going to Malmaison instead of attending the *fêtes* in the Tuileries.

Count Nesselrode at last besought his friend, Mademoiselle de Cochelet, to make the Emperor acquainted with the general dissatisfaction of the Faubourg St Germain, when Alexander should again call on the companion of the Queen to talk with her, as he would often do, about the prospects of Hortense.

"Sire," said Mademoiselle de Cochelet, "in the Faubourg St Germain they are jealous of the zeal your Majesty shows on behalf of the Queen. Count Nesselrode takes it much to heart. 'Our Emperor,'

he says, 'goes far too often to Malmaison. All the diplomatists feel astonished at it, and society begins to murmur. They fear lest he may succumb to influences which it is not his policy to follow.'"

"In that I recognize my faithful Nesselrode," the Emperor replied with a smile, "he easily feels disquietude. What do I care for the Faubourg St Germain? So much the worse for these fair ladies if they do not count me amongst their conquests! I prefer the noble qualities of the heart to all outward appearance, and I find everything worthy of affection and admiration in the company of Josephine, the Queen of Holland, and the Prince Eugène. I prefer being with them, in the familiarity of intimate friendship, to the society of people who behave like lunatics, and who, instead of enjoying the triumph we have prepared for them, only think of ruining their enemies, and in doing so begin with those who formerly so generously protected them. I have no patience with their extravagance!"

"The French ladies are coquettish," the Emperor said in another part of the conversation; "when I came here I was greatly afraid of them, for I know to what degree they can be amiable, but it strikes me their hearts are no longer theirs. This is the reason I respond to their advances as I do. I am on the look-out not to be deceived, but I am afraid these ladies covet admiration so much as to feel hurt at finding their lavishly-bestowed attentions repaid by customary politeness merely."

Mademoiselle de Cochelet undertook the defence of

the French ladies against the Emperor. She told him he ought not to judge them by the manner in which they behaved with respect to him, since it was but natural that they should feel enthusiastic for a young Emperor, who presented himself in so favourable a light! They might wish to be noticed by him without being coquettish.

"But have your ladies really waited for my coming," replied the Emperor, with the sad smile peculiar to him, "to feel their hearts beat? I seek genius and wit, but I shun all those who would fain exercise over me an influence derived from my affection. I consider this nothing but egotism, and am unwilling to serve it."

Whilst the Royalists and the ladies of the Faubourg St Germain were entertaining the allies with lavish hospitality, and flattering the newly-returned King with tales of popular rejoicing, the nation was already beginning to feel dissatisfied. The allies had done their work, had given back to France her legitimate King, and crowned their enterprise by stipulating in the treaty of peace that her territory should be reduced to the old boundaries of the ante-revolutionary time.

France was obliged to submit to the will of her conquerors, who took from the weakness of Royalty what they had been obliged to grant to the strength of Imperialism.

All fortified frontier-places which had been gained by a heavy sacrifice of blood, and were now occupied

by French garrisons, were to be given back,—mighty and powerful France was to shrivel into the France of thirty years before!

It was this that made the nation feel dissatisfied. Those very Frenchmen who had left Napoleon's cause, because they were tired of his continual wars, were yet proud of his conquests, and most unwilling to consent to a cession that wounded their national vanity. They felt angry with the King for having submitted to such a humiliation, and said that he had prized his crown higher than the honour of France.

Louis XVIII. himself keenly felt the humiliation connected with the resumption of the old French boundaries. He had tried hard to make the allies desist from their demands, but they had given his diplomatists to understand that if he did not fancy the newly-shaped France, he was at liberty to cede it to Maria Louisa.

Thus the King was forced to acquiesce in the arrangement which had been made, but he did so with great bitterness of heart, and whenever his courtiers exalted the merits of the allies, he might be heard to whisper, "Mes chers amis, les ennemis!"

With such feelings towards the allies, it was with reluctance only, and not until after a long and obstinate struggle, that Louis granted what they asked for the family of Napoleon. But the Emperor Alexander kept his word, and stood up for the rights of Queen Hortense and her children, defending her against the hatred of the Bourbons, the ill-will of the Royal-

ists, and the indifference of the allies. To him alone, and to his fortitude, did the family of the ex-Emperor owe the clause in the treaty of the 11th of April, in which Louis XVIII. solemnly pledged himself "that the titles and dignities of all the members of the Imperial family should be recognized and considered legitimate."

Alexander by great efforts at last succeeded in obtaining from Louis XVIII. a title and some property for Hortense. It was solely owing to the Czar's reiterated demands that the King nominated her Duchess of St Leu, giving her at the same time her estates as an independent duchy.

But these concessions were made reluctantly, and through the pressure of the obligations Louis XVIII. was under towards princes who had given him back his throne. These obligations the Bourbons would have forgotten as gladly as they did the Revolution or the Empire.

The Bourbons seemed to awake from a long slumber, and felt astonished that the world had moved onward during the time of their absence.

According to their opinion everything ought to have remained as it was twenty years ago, and they refused to recognize the legitimacy of events that had taken place during this period. Consequently King Louis signed the first document laid before him as given "in the nineteenth year of his reign," and tried in every respect to revert to the year 1789. It was probably owing to this extraordinary manner of viewing things that the title deeds, in which

Louis XVIII. nominated Hortense Duchess of St Leu, were couched in terms necessarily offensive to the Queen. They ran: "The King raises Mademoiselle Hortense de Beauharnois to the rank of Duchesse de St Leu."

The Queen was very indignant on receiving this communication, and at once protested.

"Is it possible," she said to Mademoiselle de Cochelet as she rose with great animation, "that M. de Nesselrode supposed I would consent to accept such a title? Louis XVIII., now he is recognized as King of France, has the power to sanction by any document he pleases the possession of my estates of St Leu; but I cannot consent to his adding to it in this manner a title which I have the right to take, and which, if accepted in this way, would give me the appearance of denying the validity of the one that belonged to me. I received the title of Queen without at all desiring it; it did not render me happy, and I lose it without regret. What do I care, after all, for the title given me! but when I am called upon to stoop to a victorious party, I must not make any concession."

Then, walking about the room in increased excitement, she added:

"The King has just signed the first act of the nineteenth year of his reign, and it is a manifestation of his wish not to recognize the past. He is certainly the master, if the nation consent to it; but we owe it to the nation that raised us so high never to disavow what they did for us; hence I consider it

my duty never to let it be forgotten that I have been a Queen, though I do not insist upon being called so; but I will only accept this compensation offered for all my children have lost, from persons who will recognize what they were as well as what I was.

"Do not believe," the Queen continued, as she drew nearer to Mademoiselle de Cochelet, "that this change of title does not possess importance. Has it not been stated in the papers that my brother, on arriving here, had himself announced to the King as the Marquis de Beauharnois? He thought it beneath his dignity to contradict these falsehoods, and he was wrong; but those who invented them were well aware that they are false: they wish to persuade the French that the persons thus placed at their head have recognized the slight validity of their claims, and have come to lay their titles unceremoniously at the feet of the Bourbons. Such are the consequences of a system which wishes to annihilate all the glories of the past, and in which I cannot take part without insulting France and the Emperor. Peoples are as proud as kings; they will not allow those they have exalted to be abased, and they adhere to what is of their own creation, until they think proper to destroy it again. If feelings change, if the Bourbons become again kings of France, if the nation consider it right and dismiss us, we have nothing to say; but our dignity is too closely connected with the dignity of France for us to consent to compromise ourselves in such a fashion."

At the moment the Queen finished this sentence

Prince Eugène entered the room; his sister gave him the document to read, and he was as much scandalized as she was. Both begged Mademoiselle de Cochelet to tell Monsieur de Nesselrode what they thought, and that the Queen would accept nothing.

The indefatigable lady returned to Paris and saw Nesselrode, who was her intimate friend. After listening to her, he replied with an air of annoyance:

"What would you have me do? Nothing is to be obtained from Monsieur de Blacas; they all seem to have returned from another world, and I really believe they are surprised to find the children grown up whom they left in the cradle. I was unable to obtain anything better from the King's minister. Louis XVIII. is certainly disposed to treat kindly Prince Eugène, the Queen, and the Empress; but he would like only to be obliged to treat them as he would have done in 1789, for the Court do not like to hear a word about the new system, and the titles of Empress and Queen would always stick in their throats."

"But you are well aware," said Mademoiselle de Cochelet, returning to the charge, "that these princesses intend to assume a more modest title, as the Empress intends to take that of Duchesse de Navarre, and the Queen that of Duchesse de St Leu."

"Yes!" Monsieur de Nesselrode continued, "if the only point were their assumption of the titles that

suit them, no one would have a word to say; but our object is to establish a Duchy for the Queen, granting her an independent fortune, which she can leave to her children,—and for that a decree of the new sovereign is required."

It was at length decided that the Duke of Vicenza should be called into council, and Nesselrode left the lady, declaring that the unlucky Duchy cost him more trouble than did the treaty of Paris.

At the consultation that took place a few days later, it was decided that it would be more advantageous both for the Queen and the entire Imperial family, to establish the Duchy of St Leu as the result of the treaty of April 11. Hence, by inserting "Hortense Eugènie, designated in the treaty of April 11," Louis would be forced to recognize her as a Queen, as it was stated in that treaty that all the members of the family should retain their titles; while at the same time this royal designation, which appeared to them so hard of digestion, would not offend their eyes.

The letters patent were, therefore, drawn up in this form, and although it was but a negative and indirect recognition of the former royal title, it was at any rate no longer an humiliation to accept it.

The Viceroy of Italy, the high-minded and universally beloved Eugène, who upon the Czar's express wish had come to Paris to watch over his interests, caused the Bourbons equally great embarrassment.

It was impossible for the King not to do some justice to the merits of one of the most distinguished heroes of the empire, who at the same time was

the son-in-law of the King of Bavaria. When Eugène expressed a wish to be presented to Louis, an audience was at once granted to him.

But how was he to be received? What title was to be given to Napoleon's step-son, the Viceroy of Italy? It would have been too ridiculous to repeat the absurdity of Hortense's title-deed, and to call Eugène "Vicomte de Beauharnois;" but to accord him the title of royalty would have compromised the legitimate dignity of the dynasty. In this dilemma King Louis invented what he thought a good expedient. When the Duc d'Aumont introduced the Prince, the King approached him with a gracious smile, and said, "I rejoice, Monsieur, my Marshal of France, to make your acquaintance."

Eugène, who had just been about to salute the King, stopped short, and turned round to see whom the sovereign might be addressing. Louis smiled and continued,

"You, sir, are this Marshal of France, for I raise you to that rank."

"Sire," Eugène replied, bowing low before the King, "I feel obliged for your kind intentions; but the misfortune of holding a high rank, to which fate has raised me, prevents my accepting the proud title with which you have just honoured me. I feel very grateful to you, sire, but I must decline."

Thus the King's ruse proved a failure, and Eugène went forth a conqueror from this first interview with Louis. He did not stand in need of assistance from the King of France, for his father-in-law, the King

of Bavaria, had raised him to the rank of a prince of his family, and given him the duchy of Leuchtenberg. Thither Eugène retired, and lived to enjoy many a peaceful year by the side of a loving wife, and surrounded by his children, till at last death overtook him in 1824, and tore him from a family that deeply lamented his loss.

CHAPTER XXV.

MADAME DE STAËL.

THE Restoration, which prostrated so many great men and again exalted many a half-forgotten name, brought back to Paris amongst others a person who had been banished from France by Napoleon, and who contrived to add during her exile new lustre to her already famous name. This was Madame de Staël, the celebrated daughter of Necker, and the well-known authoress of "Corinne" and "Delphine."

The war waged between Madame de Staël and the powerful Emperor of the French had been a long and inveterate one, and this woman, with her genius and her eloquence, crowned with the laurel-wreath of exile, had perhaps done Napoleon more injury than a whole army of enemies.

Both hated each other cordially, and yet it was in Napoleon's power to have changed this hatred instantly into love. Madame de Staël was but too

willing to receive the young hero of Marengo and Arcola with enthusiasm, wishing to play the part of an Egeria to this new Numa Pompilius. In the heat of her admiration, carried away by too lively an imagination, Madame de Staël in her intercourse with Napoleon had even forgotten her position as a lady. She had only remembered that she was a poetess, and thought that consequently she was fully entitled to celebrate the young hero, and to hail with a glowing dithyramb the radiant star that rose over France.

Madame de Staël therefore did not wait until Bonaparte came to her, but eagerly sought to make herself acquainted with him.

She wrote the most enthusiastic letters to the returning conqueror of Italy, letters which pleased the young General but little. Occupied with his plans of campaigns, and with other important enterprises, Napoleon had not been able to find time for the perusal of the poetical works of Madame de Staël. He knew nothing of her except that she was the daughter of Necker, which was but an indifferent recommendation in Napoleon's eyes, for he not only denied his admiration to that minister's genius, but even went so far as to assert that he was the author of the Revolution.

It was with astonishment therefore that the young General received the enthusiastic lady's letters. He used to show them to his friends, and say with a shrug of the shoulders, "Can you understand this madness?"

But Madame de Staël was not to be discouraged by the cold silence of Bonaparte. Again and again she wrote, her letters becoming more and more enthusiastic.

In one of these epistles she went so far as to say: "It was evidently an egregious error, an entire misunderstanding of human nature, that the quiet and timid Josephine had bound up her fate with that of a tempestuous temper like his. She, Madame de Staël, and Napoleon seemed to be born for each other, and it appeared as if nature had only gifted her with so enthusiastic a disposition in order to enable her to admire such a hero as he was."

Bonaparte tore up this letter, as soon as he received it, and, throwing its fragments into the fire, exclaimed:

"What! this eccentric woman, this manufacturer of sentiments, dares to compare herself with Josephine? I shall not answer her letters."

He kept his word, and did not answer. But Madame de Staël did not understand this silence, or rather pretended not to understand it. Little accustomed to surrender any of her plans, she eagerly wished to have her own way, and resolved upon having an interview with Napoleon, in spite of his indifference.

And she really carried out her intention. She succeeded in overcoming all the obstacles that rose in her way, and the interview, so ardently wished for by the one party, so long shunned by the other, took place at last. Madame de Staël was introduced into the Tuileries, and received by Napoleon and his

wife. The personal appearance of the witty and illustrious lady was but little calculated to disarm Bonaparte's prejudices. She was, as usual, dressed in the most tasteless and fantastic manner, having forgotten that Napoleon liked to see a lady simply and tastefully attired. In this conversation the poetess fired off the most brilliant rockets of her wit, but Napoleon, instead of being fascinated by them, felt his dislike against her increase.

It was in this ill-tempered mood that he answered Madame de Staël's rather indiscreet question,—"Which woman was in his eyes the greatest?" with the sarcastic remark,—"She who gives most children to the state."

Madame de Staël had come with a heart full of enthusiasm and admiration; she had addressed Napoleon as "a god descended on earth;" she had come as a gifted poetess, and went away an offended woman. She never forgave Bonaparte this sarcastic answer, which reflected ridicule on the questioner, but revenged herself by biting *bon mots* directed both against him and his family, and which of course never failed to reach the First Consul's ears.

These weapons of wit and sarcasm, chosen by the illustrious lady to combat the hero, wounded deeper than iron or steel, the more so as Madame de Staël was a perfect mistress in the art of handling them. Napoleon felt her superiority in this respect, and his hostile feeling increased against a woman who dared to prick his Achilles' heel with the needle

of wit, and thus wound him in the most effective manner.

An inveterate war ensued between the two greatest geniuses of that time, a war which on both sides was carried on with unrelenting animosity. But the two contending parties could not be said to be fairly matched, for Napoleon was in power, and thus enabled to punish as a monarch the hostility of a talented enemy.

He accordingly banished Madame de Staël from Paris, and soon afterwards from France, and the very lady who would have gladly celebrated in her verses "the god descended on earth," went abroad as a Royalist, an enemy of Napoleon, anxious to use all her eloquence and genius to promote the cause of the exiled Bourbons, and to raise in the hearts of men an invisible, but numerous and formidable, host against her great adversary. Madame de Staël's effusions of hatred against the Emperor gained additional strength after she had rendered her name still more famous by the composition of "Corinne" and "Delphine," and she was soon as dangerous a foe as England, Russia, or Austria could ever be.

But in the midst of the triumphs which Madame de Staël enjoyed abroad, she was soon violently attacked by home-sickness. She loved her native country passionately, and felt more strongly than ever attached to it now that she was banished from its soil. She employed all the interest she could command to obtain permission to return to France,

but the Emperor remained inexorable, even after having read "Delphine."

"Women," he said, "who wish to play the part of men, I dislike quite as much as effeminate men. What is the use of these aberrations of imagination? What remains of them? Nothing! All this is unsoundness of feeling, mental derangement. I dislike this woman, perhaps I dislike her only because I have no patience with ladies who throw themselves into my arms, and God knows she has tried hard to do so."

Although Madame de Staël's solicitations to be allowed to return had met with a stern refusal, she was still quite as unwilling to relinquish her design as she had been when endeavouring to gain Napoleon's affections. Again and again she tried to attain her object, and we may well excuse her for doing so, for it was not only the return to her country she had in view, but also the recovery of a million of francs, owing to her by France.

Her father, Necker, had during the time of the great famine, when misery was almost universal and money scarce, assisted his suffering fatherland with a loan of 1,000,000 francs, required for the purchase of corn, and Louis XVI. had signed a document, in which he bound himself to repay this "national debt."

The Revolution, however, which crushed the throne of the unhappy king, buried all written promises and obligations beneath the ruins of the old

time, and Necker's loan had long been forgotten by the French government.

Madame de Staël now insisted that the Emperor should keep the promise of the late King, and demanded that the successor to the throne of the Bourbons should pay a debt which the latter had contracted during the time of her father.

We have mentioned already that, upon the occasion of her interview with Napoleon, Madame de Staël had addressed him as "a god who had descended on earth." It appears she still believed in the deity of the Emperor, and thought he would shower down upon her a golden rain out of his cornucopia.

As she was not permitted to return to France, she sent her son to plead before the Emperor on behalf of herself and her million. Well knowing, however, how difficult it would be even for him to obtain an audience of Napoleon, she addressed herself in an eloquent letter to Queen Hortense, begging her to play the part of a mediator between her and the Emperor.

Hortense, always full of compassion for the unfortunate, felt deeply interested in the fate of the talented authoress, to whom she could not refuse her admiration, and willingly undertook the office of her protectress. She was the only one who, in spite of Napoleon's displeasure, again and again stood up for the rights of the poor exile, and represented her recall as a necessary act of justice. She even went so far in her generosity as hospitably to

entertain the universally shunned son, and introduce him into her drawing-room.

Hortense's generous and eloquent entreaties and representations achieved at last what nought else could have accomplished. She succeeded in overcoming, partially at least, the Emperor's animosity against Madame de Staël. Napoleon permitted this lady to return to France, with the condition, however, that she was never to appear in Paris or its neighbourhood. Owing to Hortense's mediation he also granted Monsieur de Staël an audience, which for a long time had been solicited in vain.

The interview of Napoleon with the son of the woman whom he had so long persecuted, was as interesting as it was original. The Emperor on this occasion openly manifested his ill-feeling and even hatred against Madame de Staël, as well as her father, whilst at the same time he listened generously to the defence made by the son and grandson.

Young de Staël represented to the Emperor the impatience of his mother to return to her native country, telling him how lonely and wretched she felt in her exile.

"Oh, nonsense," the Emperor replied, "your mother is an eccentric woman. I will not say that she is bad. She possesses talent, much talent, in fact, far too much, but hers is an offensive, a revolutionary talent. She grew up in the chaos of a falling monarchy and a revolution, and bears the stamp of both on her mind. All this may become dangerous. Possessed, as she undoubtedly is, of con-

siderable genius, she may be successful in making proselytes, and I must therefore watch her. I know she does not like me; and it is for the sake of those whom she would attack, that I do not allow her to come to Paris. Suppose I were to do so? Before six months had passed she would have reduced me to the painful necessity of sending her to Bicêtre, or of shutting her up in the Temple. How disagreeable that would be! It would create great sensation, and prove very injurious to my popularity. Tell your mother that I have come to a resolution which nothing can alter. As long as I live she shall not return to Paris."

It was in vain that young De Staël assured the Emperor, in the name of his mother, that she would carefully avoid every sort of conflict, and that once in Paris she would live quite retired; Napoleon was not to be dissuaded from his resolution.

"This is all very fine! I know what such promises mean," was his answer; "I see at what you aim, but I assure you it will prove a failure. She would be a pattern and standard to the whole Faubourg St Germain. She live retired? Why, they would visit her, and she would of course return those visits. She would commit a thousand follies, and cut a thousand jokes, which to her might appear innocent enough, but would annoy me. My government is no child's play, I look seriously at everything. This I wish every one to bear in mind, and you may tell it to whomsoever you like."

Monsieur de Staël had the audacity to continue arguing with the Emperor ; he even went so far as to ask him, although this was done with becoming humility, the reason of the ill-will he bore his mother. He told Napoleon that he understood the last work of Necker, to which his mother was supposed to have contributed, had a considerable share in creating his prejudices. He assured him that this supposition was without any foundation, his mother having taken no part whatever in the composition of this book, which, besides, did ample justice to the extraordinary genius of the Emperor.

"A fine justice that! He calls me the 'necessary man.' The necessary man! And yet, according to his opinion, the first thing that ought to be done with this necessary man is to make him a head shorter. Yes, I was necessary to set matters right again, to correct your grandfather's mistakes! It is he and no one else who has to answer for the fall of the monarchy and the violent death of Louis XVI."

"Sire," the young man replied, deeply moved, "you are surely ignorant of the fact of my grandfather's possessions being confiscated, because he defended the King?"

"A pretty defence that! If I poison a man and administer to him an antidote on beholding him in the agonies of death, can I be said to have wished to save that man? Now your grandfather defended Louis XVI. exactly in that fashion. The confiscations of which you talk prove nothing at all. Was not Robespierre's fortune confiscated? Yes, I re-

peat it, even Robespierre, Marat, or Danton did not bring so much misery upon France as Necker did. It was he who made the Revolution. I lived through the Reign of Terror, and was an eye-witness of the public misery. Well, as long as I live such times shall not return, for that you can take my word. There are dreamers, who know how to draw up the most charming Utopias on paper; these are hawked about, and there are plenty of fools who read and believe them. National prosperity is in every one's mouth, but soon afterwards the people have no bread to eat. Of course it rises, and this is the usual fruit of such brainless dreams. Your grandfather was the author of those saturnalia which drove France frantic."

After this violent and angry effusion, the Emperor cooled down to a milder tone. Approaching the young man, who stood pale and speechless before him, and gently pulling his ear, as it was his wont to do, when after a dispute he wished to make peace with his adversary, he said with a gracious smile:

"You are still very young. If you had my age and experience you would view matters differently from what you do now. Your sincerity has not hurt, but pleased me; I like to see a son defend the cause of his mother. Yours has charged you with a difficult commission, and you have carried it out with much spirit. I am glad to have talked with you, for I like youth, provided it is natural, and not too conceited. But for all that I cannot hold out to you any hopes. You will gain nothing. If your mother

was in prison I should not hesitate in granting you her pardon; but she is simply exiled, and nothing shall induce me to recall her."

"But, sire, is it not quite as bad to live far from one's own country as to be in prison?"

"Oh, nonsense! These are romantic ideas. You have learned them from your mother. She is really to be pitied very much. With the exception of Paris she has all Europe for her prison."

"But, sire, all her friends live in Paris!"

"With her talent to assist her, she will not find it difficult to make new friends. I cannot understand why she should wish so very much to be allowed to come to Paris. Why is she so anxious to be in the immediate reach of tyranny? You see I do not shrink from pronouncing the word. I really do not understand it. Why can she not live in Berlin, Vienna, Milan, or London? Really she ought to go to London! There she might write pamphlets to her heart's content. In all those places I should not think of inconveniencing her; but Paris—why, Paris is *my* residence, and there I will suffer none but people who wish me well. I wish every one would remember that. I know what would be the consequence of my allowing your mother to return to Paris. She would commit herself anew, she would seduce the members of my court, would spoil Garat, as surely as she once ruined the tribunal. Of course she would at first promise everything, but she would never be able to keep herself from meddling with politics."

"Sire, I can assure you solemnly that my mother

would promise nothing that she did not mean to keep. She would not occupy herself with politics. Her inclinations are solely turned to her friends and literature."

"I know the meaning of that word, sir! While talking of society, morality, literature, and of what not, a person meddles with politics. If your mother were to come to Paris, I should be told every day of some new *bon mot* of hers, even if she had never made it. But I tell you I will suffer no such thing in the city where I reside. It really would be best for her to go to London. Why do you not advise her to do so? Monsieur Necker did not possess any administrative talent at all. I have learned what that means, during these last ten years! And now once more, tell your mother that I will never allow her to come to Paris!"

"Would not your Majesty at least, if sacred duties should demand a few days' residence—"

"Sacred duties! What do you mean by that?"

"Sire, the presence of my mother will be necessary to obtain of your government the repayment of a sacred debt."

"Nonsense about sacred! Are not all national debts sacred ones?"

"Doubtless, sire, but ours is connected with circumstances of peculiar importance."

"Peculiar importance!" the Emperor exclaimed, rising, and seemingly tired of the long conversation. "What creditor of the state does not say the same of his debt? Besides, I am not sufficiently acquainted

with your claims on my government. I have nothing to do with that, and will not occupy myself with it. If the law should decide in your favour, you shall have your money, but if favour is required to obtain it, you will expect it in vain at my hands. I should be unfavourable to you rather than otherwise."

"Sire," Monsieur de Staël began once more, just when the Emperor was about to leave the room, "Sire, my brother and I should like to settle in France, but how could we live in a country where our mother would not be allowed to accompany us everywhere?"

The Emperor, who had already reached the door, stopped, and turning round, said:

"I do not care at all for your settling in France. In fact, I should not advise you to do so. You had better go to England, there they like the Geneva set, the pamphleteers, and drawing-room politicians. You had really better go to England, for in France I should rather be against you than in your favour."

After the restoration Madame de Staël returned to her beloved and much-wished-for France. She came back eager for new distinction and renown, wishing, above all, to see the publication of her work on Germany, which on a previous occasion had been seized by the imperial police. She flattered herself with the hope that the new court would have forgotten that she was the daughter of Necker, and thought every one would receive her with open arms, anxious to recognize the influence for which she strove.

How greatly she was mistaken!

At court she was received with a cold politeness, even more offensive than open hostility. The King, in speaking of her to his confidants, called her a "Châteaubriand in petticoats;" the Duchess d'Angoulême never appeared to see the celebrated writer, never addressed a single word to her; and the remainder of the court, tenaciously clinging to old prejudices and former hatred, openly attacked her.

All Madame de Staël's efforts to obtain influence with the legitimate court remained fruitless. She was never looked upon as a powerful personage or wise counsellor, but simply as a talented writer. Her advice was laughed at, and they even went so far as to attack Necker himself.

"I am very unfortunate," Madame de Staël was heard to say to the Countess du Cayla; "Napoleon hated me because he thought I possessed wit, and here I find myself shunned or repulsed because I am endowed with common sense. Well, I can do without them, but since my presence is disagreeable to them, I shall at least endeavour to make them pay me my money."

"The sacred debt," it appears, had not been paid under the imperial régime, and Madame de Staël, therefore, tried to obtain from the legitimate King what she had been unable to receive at the hands of an illegitimate emperor.

She was well aware of the great influence the Countess du Cayla exercised over the King, and therefore hastened to seek this lady, whose acquaint-

ance she had made some time ago under the extraordinary circumstances of a romantic love affair, with the object of renewing the friendship.

The Countess, who was of opinion that "auld acquaintance should not be forgotten," showed herself grateful for the service Madame de Staël had once rendered her. She obtained for her friend the restoration of the "sacred debt," for by order of Louis XVIII. a million of francs were handed over to Madame de Staël. "But," says the Countess du Cayla in her *Mémoires*, "I believe the recovery of this million cost her no less than 400,000 francs, not to mention a set of diamonds worth about 100,000 francs."

The "I believe" of Madame du Cayla might have been expressed as a certainty; if it was necessary, the examination of her own purse and jewel-box would have reminded her of the fact.

Besides the 400,000 francs and the diamond set, Madame de Staël gave her friend good advice.

"Use the favour in which you stand," she said, "and lose no time in doing so, for if matters continue as they now are, I fear the restoration will soon be restored to rest."

"What do you mean?" the Countess asked, with a smile.

"I mean that, the King excepted, who perhaps does not say all he thinks, people about the court are going on as badly as ever they did. God only knows where their follies will yet lead them to. They are already beginning to mock the old soldiers

and favour the young priests, and that is the surest way of precipitating France into rebellion."

The Countess du Cayla looked upon this prophecy of Madame de Staël's as the offspring of uncalled-for apprehension, believing that hopes blighted and ambition disappointed had spread a cloud over the otherwise clear eyes of the poetess, which prevented her from beholding things in their real shape. She little dreamt how soon the prophecy was to be fulfilled.

Madame de Staël meanwhile consoled herself for the bad reception she had experienced at court, by assembling the *bonne société* of Paris in her drawing-room, and entertaining them with biting *bon mots* and anecdotes, fabricated almost entirely at the expense of the high nobility, who had so suddenly re-appeared with their indestructible pedigrees.

She also remembered the generosity Queen Hortense had shown her during the time of her exile; and not only her, but also Madame de Récamier, her friend, who had likewise been banished by Napoleon, not, as his enemies said, because she was the friend of Madame de Staël, but because she was one of the principal leaders of the so-called "little Church," a re-actionary society which had been formed in the Faubourg St Germain, and was one of those opposition associations which the Emperor most disliked.

Hortense had always taken Mesdames de Staël's and de Récamier's part with great warmth. For both she had been a generous mediator with the Emperor, using all her influence to persuade him to

recall them from their exile; and now that a sudden change had allowed them to return, they both hastened to assure the Queen of their gratitude and admiration.

Mademoiselle de Cochelet has described this visit of Madame de Staël's in so masterly and original a manner, that we consider ourselves justified in giving a faithful translation of her account.

Mesdames de Staël and de Récamier had asked permission of the Queen to visit her that they might express ther gratitude. The Queen upon this invited both ladies to dine with her on the following day. She asked my advice whom she ought to invite to meet so talented and well-informed a visitor as Madame de Staël.

"I for my part," she said, "do not possess sufficient courage to keep up a conversation with her. It is difficult to be witty whilst one feels distressed, and I am afraid my indifference would communicate itself to others."

We mentioned the names of a great many persons, and I greatly enjoyed saying as each new name was pronounced, "He is too dull for Madame de Staël."

The Queen laughed, but at last the list of guests to be invited was finished. We all awaited the arrival of the two illustrious ladies in great excitement. The obligation which the Queen had laid us under, namely, "to be witty at all cost," had summoned an embarrassed and stupid expression to our faces. We

looked like so many actors, who are just about to arrange themselves on the stage, whilst awaiting the drawing up of the curtain. *Bon mots* and witty remarks followed each other in the most promising manner, until the carriage was heard driving up, when our faces at once assumed a grave expression.

Madame de Récamier, who was still young and very good-looking, bearing the stamp of great *naïveté* on her features, produced the impression of being a youthful belle, watched over by a stern Duenna, so great was the contrast between her womanly and almost bashful appearance and the masculine self-consciousness of her companion. I had always heard people say, however, that Madame de Staël was a good and noble woman, and kind to those with whom she had to do. I only speak of the impression she produced on persons who saw her for the first time.

The somewhat mulatto-like expression of Madame de Staël's face, combined with the originality of her dress and her bare shoulders, either of which might have been considered handsome if looked at separately, seemed to realize but indifferently the ideal figure conceived by our imagination of the authoress of "Corinne" and "Delphine." I had hoped to behold in her one of those heroines she so admirably sketched, and stood speechless with disappointment. But after the first feeling of regret had once been overcome, I could not but acknowledge that her eyes at least were beautiful. But it remained a secret to me how her face could ever have allowed love to find a resting-

place there; and yet she was said to have frequently inspired it.

When I afterwards communicated my astonishment to the Queen, she replied:

"Perhaps it is her being capable of much love that inspires others with some passion. Besides, a man's vanity is flattered through being distinguished by such a woman; and after all, one who possesses such genius as Madame de Staël can afford to dispense with beauty."

Madame de Staël entered the room with great self-possession. The Queen asked how her daughter was, who had been expected also, and who was said to be a most fascinating young lady. I believe our gentlemen would have been still more amiable under the beautiful eyes of the daughter than under those of the mother; a bad toothache, however, prevented the young lady from being present at the party.

After the customary compliments were over, the Queen proposed a drive in the park. We were soon seated on the cushions of the Queen's *char-à-banc*, which has been rendered classical by the many celebrated and exalted personages who have successively occupied it. The Emperor Napoleon alone was never seated in it, for he never visited St Leu. With the exception of him there were but few distinguished persons of the time who had not sat in it.

As the horses only walked through the park and forest of Montmorency, the conversation was continued as if we were still in the drawing-room, and an animated and interesting exchange of ideas con-

tinued to take place. Our guests admired the charming neighbourhood, which reminded them of Switzerland. Then Italy was talked about. The Queen, who had been somewhat absent in mind, and certainly had reason to be so, suddenly asked Madame de Staël:

"Then you have been in Italy?"

Madame de Staël sat mute with astonishment, whilst the gentlemen exclaimed,

"And Corinne?—Corinne?"

"Oh, to be sure!" the Queen replied, awaking from her dream.

"So your Majesty has never read Corinne?" Monsieur de Conouville asked.

"Yes!—No!" the Queen said, in great embarrassment; "but I shall read it one day;" and, to hide an emotion which I alone could understand, she changed the subject of conversation.

She might have told the truth, and said that the book had appeared at the time when her oldest son died in Holland. The King, alarmed at her great grief, had followed the advice of Corvisart, who had said that Hortense must not be allowed to indulge in despair. It was resolved that I should read Corinne to her. She was incapable of paying much attention to the reading, but yet a painful recollection of the book had remained.

Since then I had frequently asked permission to be allowed to read her the celebrated work, but had always met with a refusal.

"No! no!" she would say, "not yet. This book

I have identified with my grief. Its very name recalls to my memory the most dreadful period of my life. I do not yet feel sufficiently strong to renew the painful impressions."

I alone therefore was capable of guessing what caused the Queen's embarrassment when she answered the questions concerning Corinne. But the authoress of course saw nothing in it but indifference to her masterly work, and I told the Queen on the following day that it would have been better to acquaint Madame de Staël with the reason of her embarrassment.

"Madame de Staël would not have been able to appreciate my feelings," she replied; "I feel that she has lost her good opinion of me, and must consider me very stupid. But it was not the proper time to speak of my painful impressions."

The large *char-à-banc* was generally preferred to the handsomest carriage (although it simply consisted of two bolstered forms placed opposite each other), because it was more favourable to the continuation of the conversation. But there was no protection against bad weather, and a heavy rain therefore sent us back to the castle dripping wet.

There a room was prepared for the ladies to rearrange their *toilette*, which had been somewhat disordered by the thunder-storm. I remained with them for some time, retained by numerous questions which Madame de Staël asked regarding the Queen and her sons. She had now ceased to be witty, as she washed and arranged herself, or rested.

"There they are," I said to myself, "returned to the natural state of life and the prosaic existence of frail humanity. These two celebrated ladies, who are almost everywhere sought after and received with deference, are as wet and as little poetic now as myself!"

I was really quite behind the scenes, but the play was soon to recommence.

Voices were heard under the window, a German accent was audible, and the two ladies called out, almost simultaneously,

"Why, that is Prince Augustus of Prussia!"

No one in the house having been aware of the Prince's intention of visiting St Leu, the meeting was quite an accidental one. The Prince came simply to call on the Queen, but it being nearly dinner-time, it was necessary to invite him to stay. This was doubtless what he wished.

Augustus of Prussia was seated on the right of the Queen, whilst Madame de Staël sat on her left. The servant of this lady had put on her napkin a small twig, which it was her custom to twist and turn in her fingers when speaking. The conversation grew very animated, and it was curious to see how Madame de Staël gesticulated with her twig. It might have been thought that it had been given her by some fairy as the talisman on which the exercise of her genius depended.

The conversation turned on Constantinople, which city several of the gentlemen present had visited. Madame de Staël was of opinion that it would be a

capital joke for a clever woman to go and turn the Sultan's head, and then induce him to grant his Turks a constitution. Whilst the dessert was on the table they spoke about the liberty of the press.

Madame de Staël quite astonished me, not merely by the brilliancy of her genius, but also by the deep gravity with which she treated questions which at that time were not considered as belonging to the domain of a lady's conversation. The drawing-room talk of the time was about metaphysics, the qualities of the heart or mind, and such like matters. It was considered the monopoly of the Emperor and of diplomatists to converse on politics. His was the age of deeds—*par excellence*, of great deeds—just as the epoch that followed was that of great and proud words, of political and literary controversies.

Madame de Staël and the Queen spoke about Hortense's poem entitled "*Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra.*"

"During the time of my exile, which you so generously strove to shorten," Madame de Staël said, "I often used to sing this song and think of you."

As she said this her face was so radiant with emotion that it might have been called beautiful. She was no longer the woman of genius only, but also the woman of heart and feeling, and I then understood how she had been able to fascinate men so greatly.

Afterwards she conversed with the Queen for some time about the Emperor.

"Why was he so angry with me?" she asked. "Did he not know how much I admired him? I

will go to Elba and see him! Do you think he would receive me well? I was made to idolize this man, and he—repulsed me!"

"Ah! Madame," the Queen replied, "I have heard the Emperor frequently say that he had set himself a great task, that he felt he had to fulfil a high mission, and he often could not help comparing his labours with the efforts of a man who was endeavouring to reach the summit of a high mountain, and allowed no obstacle to detain him on his weary way. 'All the worse for those who cross my path,' he used to say, 'for I have no time to occupy myself with them.' Now, Madame, you came in his way, but had he reached his summit, he would perhaps have lent you a helping hand."

"I must speak with him," Madame de Staël said, "people have misrepresented me."

"I think so myself," the Queen replied, "but you would do him injustice if you believed him capable of hating any one. He thought you were his enemy, and feared you. It did not often happen to him," she added with a smile; "now that he is unhappy, he will recognize a friend in you. I am convinced he would receive you well."

Madame de Staël also occupied herself much with the little princes, but she was not very successful in her endeavours to make friends with them. Perhaps it was to test their faculties that she asked them a great many trying questions.

"Do you love your uncle?"

"Very much, Madame!"

"Shall you be as fond of war as he was?"

"I should, if war did not cause so much misery."

"Is it true that your uncle made you repeat frequently a fable which begins, 'The stronger is always in the right?'"

"Madame, we had to repeat fables very often, but one not more frequently than others."

Prince Napoleon, who was gifted with great powers of discrimination, and whose judgment was already highly developed at an early age, answered all these questions very sensibly, and after the cross-examination was over, said, in rather a loud voice:

"How inquisitive this lady is! (elle est bien questionneuse.) Is this what people call *avoir d'esprit?*"

After the visitors had gone, each passed his judgment on them. Young Napoleon's opinion of them was least favourable, but he only dared to express it in a whisper.

I, for my own part, felt more dazzled than attracted by the two ladies. It was impossible not to admire Madame de Staël's genius, in spite of all its offensiveness and aberrations, but there was no womanly loveliness and grace, no attractive sweetness in her appearance.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LIFE AT BADEN BADEN.

The state of the Queen's health rendering it necessary that she should travel, it was decided that she should proceed, in the first instance, to Plombières. Hortense long hesitated about taking her children with her, from whom she felt reluctant to part. The Duke de Vicenza was therefore consulted on this momentous question.

"As their lot is fixed in France," he said, "you must accustom people to see them there. Should the Queen take them away, who knows whether they may not be prohibited returning, and the Duchy of St Leu be entirely sequestrated, which we had such difficulty in obtaining, and whose revenues are so slowly paid. The Queen is not being dealt with frankly, and hence she must distrust the intentions of those opposed to her, and give no hold to her enemies."

With reference to this advice the Queen would sometimes say to Mademoiselle de Cochelet:

"It seems to me astonishing that people talk about my enemies. How can I have any, I who regarded as my friends all those that suffered, and who felt so happy in being useful to them! I had no enemy in

those days. Power, then, is a better thing than I fancied it; I do not regret it, but I feel I was wrong in not setting more value upon it."

Such was the way in which the Queen often spoke, at the very time when people had already begun to represent her as being in a state of despair at the loss of her power, and setting every resource at work to regain it.

Mademoiselle de Cochelet constantly reminds us that gentleness, impartiality, and resignation formed the basis of the Queen's character, and that she never departed from her habitual calmness, or expressed any feeling of indignation, except when she had proof of injustice and falseness. On such occasions she would say eagerly:

"Ah! I did not believe the world so wicked; is it possible that it is so difficult to know the truth? I feel happy at being aloof from all that appears so contemptible in my sight. I would gladly become a hermit."

At other moments she would say:

"We must be indulgent, for the world is more light-minded than wicked. The evil it does is, doubtless, the same, but it is done without intention. It must be pardoned and be loved."

She exhorted her children never to cherish a hateful feeling. "It is the nature of things," she would say to them, "that places men in such and such a rank. You must never feel angry with those who take your place, and, if they act properly, you must possess the courage to allow it and do them justice,

under whatever circumstances you may be brought into contact with them."

The government of the Restoration had behaved shabbily to the Queen, having seized on her income and the arrears due from the treasury. This was so unjust that it was supposed to be a temporary measure, but in the mean while, as the Queen must live, she thought of selling the precious articles she possessed. Both the Viceroy and Hortense wished to sell at once the pictures at Malmaison, in order to pay their mother's debts. Eugène raised some money on the jewellery of the latter, a circumstance which eventually gave rise to the calumny that Hortense was actively engaged in bringing about the return of the Emperor from Elba.

When the moment at which she was to leave St Leu arrived, the agony of the Queen at the idea of separating from her children grew greater. To give herself courage she repeated all the reasons that had decided her, and said to her companion:

"I leave my children in France, in their country, the country that saw their birth, which received them with such acclamations, and I know not why I tremble at parting from them. It is not reasonable, for what can happen to them here? The first peasant would be their defender, if any misfortune menaced them. Had they been obliged to quit France I should have had greater reason for alarm. I should have taken them among peoples wearied of our victories, and who can feel no sympathy either for the French name or for those who bear it."

Mademoiselle de Cochelet shared her ideas, and reassured her as well as she could in the natural anxiety she felt at parting from beings who were at once so dear and so interesting.

The Queen left her boys with Madame de Boubers, who took care of them like a second mother, under the guardianship of Monsieur Devaux, who was not to leave them for a single moment. The worthy Abbé Bertrand, who gave the elder boy lessons in Latin, and taught the younger to read, was also to exercise surveillance over them. These two gentlemen were the only members of her household the Queen had retained, and though in consequence of their age not very vigorous defenders, their prudence, zeal, and devotion were a guarantee that they would defend the precious treasures confided to them from all accidents.

The Queen set out, accompanied only by Mademoiselle de Cochelet, and after staying for a time at Plombières, she received a letter from her brother Eugène, begging her to come to Baden Baden, which little watering-place was at the moment crowded with crowned heads. The most marked character was Eugène's father-in-law, the excellent King of Bavaria, who had a mania for buying pretty bonnets for his relatives. Another noble character was the Grand-Duchess Stephanie of Baden, who, since the fall of the Emperor, had been treated with great contumely by her husband's relatives. It was seriously proposed at the Congress of Vienna that the Grand-Duke should disclaim his marriage, as having been

driven into it by force. The most painful moment in the life of the Grand-Duchess was probably when she received a letter from Napoleon, ordering her to return to France, as the allies were on the point of invading Baden. She said on this subject to Queen Hortense:

"I was a wife, a mother, and a sovereign, and I could not thus abandon all my duties. I dared to disobey the Emperor, by remaining in the invaded country. What various emotions I experienced! I saw all the innumerable armies pass, which were about to invade France! One day I heard that a battle gained by the Emperor had driven the allies across the Rhine, and fugitives arrived to confirm the news. A few days later I learned the surrender of Paris, and the abdication of the Emperor! So many varying sensations in so short a period were enough to kill me."

The sovereign ladies engaged in dinners and promenades, while their husbands, thinking only of political matters, were preparing to go and share the spoils of France at the Congress of Vienna, which had been put off till the month of September. The conquered party were naturally in a state of great suspense, and Hortense was before all anxious about the fate of her brother. One morning Mademoiselle de Cochelet was surprised by a visit from Madame de Krüdener, her old acquaintance, whom she had not seen since 1809. She sprang up to rush into her arms, but the other checked her, and said with an inspired air:

"I have come to see your Queen, for I must save her from a danger that menaces her. I wished to come on hearing of her arrival, but God did not permit it. Persons more unhappy than she demanded my attention."

"What have you to say to her?" Mademoiselle de Cochelet asked in great alarm.

"I have come to reveal to her what God wishes that she should know. You know how dearly I love her! I have not seen her since 1809, but I have prayed for her very frequently. She must undergo her destiny. She is beloved of God. The poor Queen of Prussia, that angelic princess, and Queen Hortense, are my two celestial types of women and martyrs. God has given me the mission to serve them. I have written for your perusal all I ascertained for the former, and now I know all the misfortunes that await the latter. Since I saw her last she has lost a crown, a brilliant position, a friend, and a tender mother. I know all this, but God loves her and wishes to try her: she must resign herself, for she has not yet seen the end of her sufferings."

"What do you know about all this, my dear Madame?" Mademoiselle de Cochelet asked; "come, let us talk as we used to do: sit down, and do not alarm me thus about the future of a person whom you love as much as I do."

"Yes, she will be happy with her pure, sublime soul. But she must expect nothing from man, for God alone will protect her. Above all, she must not return to France, but go to Russia, where the

Emperor Alexander will be the refuge of the unhappy."

"You really terrify me," said Mademoiselle de Cochelet; "what can occur to her more wretched than what she has already experienced?"

"Ah! you do not know what a frightful year 1815 will be. You believe that the Congress of Vienna will terminate? Undeceive yourself. The Emperor Napoleon will be greater than ever; he will leave his island; but those who take his part will be tracked, persecuted, and punished. They will not have a place to lay their heads in."

She had remained standing while thus speaking. Her short figure, her excessive thinness, her tangled light hair and her flashing eyes, had something supernatural about them, which involuntarily terrified her listener.

"The Queen has gone out," she said to her, "return to-morrow. I know the pleasure she will have in seeing you again; but if you wish to speak to her about her mother you will make her weep, for she cannot hear the name mentioned without bursting into tears."

"What matter her tears!" Madame de Krüdener said, as she went out, "God loves those who weep, for they are the predestined. But if the Queen wishes to see me, let her remain at home, for I cannot return often. I have no longer a will of my own, for I belong to those whom God sends me to relieve; but bear in mind what I told you; do not let her return to France."

While saying this she went out, leaving her auditor so stunned by all she had heard that she did not know whether she was awake or asleep; she had terrified her, and she trembled without knowing wherefore.

Mademoiselle de Cochelet had some difficulty in recognizing the author of "Valerie," who, while depicting gentle and tender feelings, had written her own life-history to a certain extent, and who in 1809 still possessed all the charm and timidity of a weak woman, combined with a deep sense of religion. At the time of her visit she had the assurance and absolute tone of a prophetess, and the effect she produced on Mademoiselle de Cochelet was increased by the entire faith the latter placed in her words.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MADAME DE KRÜDENER.

As soon as the Queen returned, her companion hastened to tell her of the visitor who had called, and of the terror that Madame de Krüdener's predictions had inspired her with.

"I can recognize you in that," the Queen said. "I will receive Madame de Krüdener with pleasure, for she is an excellent person, whom I like very much, but to believe she is a prophetess is a different affair."

The next day Madame de Krüdener waited on the

Queen, and had a private interview. After leaving her, she said to Mademoiselle de Cochelet:

"What an angel your Queen is! Heaven will reward her. But let her believe me and not return to France, but go to Russia."

When Mademoiselle de Cochelet returned to the Queen, she found her eyes red.

"Well, Madame," she said to her, as she kissed her hand, "she has afflicted you."

"How could it be otherwise? She reopens all the wounds of my heart by speaking to me of all the losses I have suffered. She has so tender a mind that her words penetrate through the sympathy she feels. She tells me nothing new in speaking to me of resignation to the will of Heaven. If she did not leave that track, she might be believed without hesitation; but when she declares herself inspired and pretends to foresee the future, she destroys every feeling of confidence in me; my reason refuses to believe her, as does my religion. I only see an exalted woman in her. I suppose her to be ill; she still interests me, but she no longer produces any effect on me."

"Still, Madame, she is so perfect, so detached from earthly things, that we may easily suppose that a soul so purified is nearer to God. Why should He not employ it to call other souls to Himself, and warn those He loves of the dangers that menace them?"

"That cannot be, any more for her than others, for, if we put faith in our own inspirations, what is there to prevent them being bad? We must reject such as not coming from God. The principle is detestable, as

there is a choice to make, and only the good would be free from danger, for the wicked would take their hatreds for inspirations. Religion enlightens us better ; it prescribes for us a road to follow in which we cannot go astray, as it tells us to love even our enemies, and do them all the good that depends on ourselves."

"But a great number of crimes have been committed in the name of religion."

"Certainly, because man mingles his bad passions in everything. Still, if in doing evil he deceives himself for a moment, he cannot deceive others ; the good sense of each can judge at what point he departs from that which religion commands. But a person who believes it possible that God inspires her has no longer any guide but herself ; and everybody is not so loving as Madame de Krüdener."

Still the Queen was not prepared to deny the good qualities of the prophetess, and said in the course of the conversation from which we quote :

"Mon Dieu ! No one can respect her virtues more than I do ; there is no danger in seeing and imitating them ; but I wish that your reason would discern what there is good in her, and what is dangerous. It is not that Madame de Krüdener appears to me mad, when she says to me, 'Do not return to France,' for she may possibly be right. Seeing the turn things are taking, I believe I shall have a difficulty in living there tranquilly. But when she tells me that I ought to go to Russia, that the Congress will not finish, that the Emperor will return, and those who join him be

ruined,—how can she know that? I answered her with moderation, that I could not go to Russia, that it was the very Emperor Alexander, whom she believes the universal saviour, who fixed my lot in France; and I added that if the Emperor, as she assured me, returned to France, I could not forget that I was his daughter, and even if the misfortunes she predicted for those who favoured him befell me, my place was by his side, and I should not desert him."

Madame de Krüdener resided at the village of Lichtenthal, in a modest house, with her daughter, a lovely girl of eighteen. The principal furniture of her room consisted of a large wooden cross, before which she knelt with those whom she desired to fortify in the Faith. Up to this time she had hardly known the Emperor of Russia, over whom she exercised so great an influence at a later date. She was even a little prejudiced against him, though it did not prevent her saying that safety was only to be found by his side. It was with difficulty that she could be induced to pay her respects to the Empress of Russia, then residing at Baden, and she merely repeated to her the warnings about the terrible year 1815.

The Queen of Holland was very anxious to introduce Madame de Krüdener to her sister-in-law, and a day was appointed for the interview. Hortense led her visitor into her sister's room, and presently came running out with mad bursts of laughter, greatly to the surprise, and slightly to the scandal, of Mademoiselle de Cochelet.

But there was legitimate reason for laughter. The Princess Augusta, unacquainted with the character of Madame de Krüdener, had prepared to receive her with all due formality. Judge of her surprise, then, when she saw the prophetess, standing before her, raise her eyes and arms to Heaven, and speak emphatically about resignation, and misfortunes even greater than those which the Imperial family had already experienced. The Princess, understanding nothing of all this, had sat with widely-open mouth, while Prince Eugène firmly believed that a mad woman had been introduced. All this proved too much for the Queen's gravity, and she had run out of the room for fear of laughing in their faces.

Presently, however, she returned and smuggled poor Madame de Krüdener out of the room, before she perceived the effect she had produced.

We have not finished with this lady yet, however; but shall return to her at the proper season, at a period when her prophecies were fulfilled, and she once more displayed her friendship for the unhappy Queen.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OLD TIMES AND NEW.

The Restoration was an accomplished fact. The armies of the allied powers had at last left France, and Louis XVIII. was now its sole master. He

and the members of his family, together with the exiled nobles, who were returning from all parts of the world, were the representatives of old France, of France with her tyrannical government, polished manners, intriguing aristocracy, and gross immorality. Opposed to these stood young France, the generation of the Revolution and the Empire, the new nobility without any other pedigree than their own merits, who could not speak of the adventures of the "œil de bœuf" and the "petites maisons," it is true, but who could relate many a story of bloody battle-fields, and of life in the hospital.

These two parties could not but be hostile to each other. There was a continual struggle going on between them at the court of Louis XVIII., but in this warfare young France, who hitherto had been accustomed to conquer, suffered daily and humiliating defeats. Old France stood victorious. It did not conquer through courage or merit, but through the traditions of the past, which, without regard to the great changes France had undergone, were once more adopted as a standard for the present.

King Louis had promised his subjects, in the treaty of the 11th of April, that the titles and dignities of the new dukes, princes, and marshals should not be taken from them, and they were therefore allowed to appear at court. The part, however, they played there was insignificant, or even humiliating, for they were plainly given to understand that, although they were suffered, they were far from being welcome.

Those gentlemen who, previous to the Revolution, had enjoyed the privilege of driving with the King in his carriages, continued to possess this right, whilst the members of the Napoleonistic nobility were never admitted to a similar distinction. The ladies of the old régime had their *tabourets* and their *petites et grandes entrées* at the Tuileries, but it would have been considered absurd had the duchesses of young France claimed the same honour.

It was the Duchess of Angoulême who set the ladies of the Faubourg St Germain the bad example of narrow-minded intolerance, and of reckless animosity against the Napoleonistic institutions. It was she, more than any one else, who subjected the representatives of the Revolution to deliberate insult. It is true that the daughter of the murdered King, who had once been a prisoner in the Temple, had sufficient reason to remember and hate the terrors of the Revolution, but she went too far in trying to forget and ignore that period altogether.

At one of the first dinners the newly-returned King gave in honour of his allies, the Duchess of Angoulême, who was sitting by the side of the King of Bavaria, asked that sovereign, while pointing to the Grand-Duke of Baden:

"Is not that the Prince who married a princess of Napoleon's making? What a weakness to ally himself to that General!"

The Duchess forgot, or wished to ignore the fact, that the King of Bavaria, as well as the Emperor of Austria, who was sitting on her left and heard what

she said, were likewise allied to that "General Bonaparte."

When she took possession of the rooms she had formerly occupied in the Tuileries, the Duchess asked her old pianoforte-tuner, Dubois, who had continued to hold this office during the time of the Empire, and was now showing his mistress the beautiful instruments of Josephine:

"And where is my piano?"

This piano had been an old spinet, and the Duchess was quite astonished not to find it again, as if thirty years had not elapsed since she had last seen it, and as if there had never been such a thing as a 10th of August, 1792, when the people demolished the Tuileries.

But it was the principle of the Royalists to ignore history from 1795 to 1814. The Bourbons seemed to have altogether forgotten that between the last *levée* of King Louis XVI. and the first one of Louis XVIII. more than one night had passed. The Duchess d'Angoulême was quite surprised that persons whom she had known as children had since then grown, and wished to treat every one as she had done in 1789.

After the death of the Empress Josephine, the Count d'Artois visited Malmaison, which, hardly existing previous to the Revolution, had been almost entirely created by Josephine.

The Empress, who took great interest in botany, had built at Malmaison magnificent hot-houses, where plants from almost every part of the world were col-

lected; for many princes and potentates, knowing her fancy for flowers, had been anxious in the days of her greatness to show their friendship by presents of rare plants. Even the Prince Regent of England had found means, during the war with France, to send the Empress several West Indian specimens, and it was therefore but natural that the conservatories of Malmaison should be better stocked, and more perfect and interesting, than any others in Europe.

The Count d'Artois, when, as we have already mentioned, he paid a visit to Malmaison, the far-famed residence of Josephine, and was shown the hot-houses and their valuable contents, exclaimed, as if recognizing old friends of 1789,

"Oh, there are our flowers from Trianon!"

The exiled nobility, who had just returned to France, brought back with them the same stupid prejudices as their masters.

They had preserved the customs, manners, and claims of the anti-revolutionary time, as if they could still go back to the year 1789. They had so high an opinion of their own merits that they were altogether unwilling to do justice to those of others. Yet the fact of having fled from France was all they could boast of, and for this sacrifice they now wished to be compensated.

Every one of these emigrants returning from Coblentz thought himself entitled to office under government or to a pension, and could not understand how it was that those who enjoyed these favours were

not forthwith thrown aside. A continual succession of intrigues, calumnies, and cabals was going on, and old France generally succeeded in ousting the officers and pensioners of Imperial manufacture from their offices and stipends. All high commands in the army were given to the marquises, dukes, and counts of the old régime, who in Coblentz had occupied themselves with embroidery-work, whilst France was shedding her blood on battle-fields, and who now began to drill Napoleon's veterans according to the regulations of 1789.

At court the etiquette of former days was again introduced—a change which was effected with comparative ease, for the Royalist gentry had preserved the manners and levity which had once distinguished them in the *œil de bœuf* and *petites maisons* of old France.

These old cavaliers, who despised the new generation as being too moral and pedantic, laughed at young men who had but one mistress, and to whom the wife of a friend was too sacred a person to be approached with a dishonourable thought.

When in the company of such *nigauds* of the new school, these old gentlemen were fond of talking to each other about the "good old time," and their adventures in days gone by. In the midst of so many innovations, which could not all be done away with, they derived a sweet satisfaction from the remembrance of the *ancien régime*, and when speaking of that time they would forget their age and be once more the young *roués* of the *œil de bœuf*.

One day the Marquis de Chimène and the Duke de Lauraquais met each other in the antechamber of Louis XVIII. They were both heroes of that time when the boudoir was the battle-field, and the myrtle assumed the place of the laurel. Speaking of some event in the reign of Louis XVI., the Duke de Lauraquais, in order to denote the time of its occurrence, said:

"It happened whilst I was carrying on my *liaison* with your wife."

"Oh, then, it was in 1776," the Marquis de Chimène quietly replied.

Both gentlemen were far from seeing anything extraordinary in such a conversation. This *liaison* had been a very natural thing. It would have been ridiculous on the part of the Duke to deny it, and quite as absurd in Chimène to feel annoyed at it.

By far the cleverest and most enlightened of all these gentlemen of the old *régime* was King Louis XVIII. himself.

He was not blind to the faults and mistakes of those who surrounded him, and placed but little confidence in his courtiers. Still he was unable to free himself from their influence, and after having given his people a constitution, in spite of the opposition of the whole court and the Prince de Condé, who used to call it scornfully, "Mademoiselle la Constitution de 1791," he retired into the interior of the Tuileries, and allowed Blacas his Premier to occupy himself with the details of government.

King Louis, although buried in the interior of his

palace, was undeniably the most enlightened of all the members of the old school. He looked many things straight in the face, to which his counsellors deliberately closed their eyes, and felt great astonishment at finding that many of the officers and nobles of Napoleon, who formed part of the inventory left behind by the Emperor, were by no means so vulgar and ridiculous as they had been represented to him.

"They told me over there," Louis XVIII. once said, "that Napoleon's generals were nothing but rustics and ruffians. I think this has proved entirely untrue. That man has schooled them admirably. They are civil, and quite as sharp as the agents of the old court. We must be on our guard against them."

Whenever Louis XVIII. in an unguarded moment did justice to the merits of the new time, he inflicted a painful blow on the representatives of old France, who did not always take the trouble to conceal the angry feelings with which they heard him.

Louis felt this, and in order to reconcile his old jealous courtiers he was frequently induced, although against his own inclination, to subject the "parvenus" to all sorts of humiliations.

Continual quarrels and intrigues within the very walls of the Tuileries were the necessary consequence of such proceedings, and the King was frequently much annoyed and even alarmed by them.

"I am angry with myself as well as others," he was once heard to say to one of his confidants, "an

invisible and mysterious power seems to counteract me, and to take delight in undermining my popularity and authority."

"But you are King, nevertheless!"

"Doubtless, I am the King," Louis replied, "but can it also be said that I am the master? A king is a man who does nothing all his life but receive embassies, grant tiresome audiences, hear still more tiresome speeches, go once a year in state to Notre Dame, and who finally is buried with great pomp at St Denis. But the master is he who commands, and possesses the power to make his orders respected. He crushes intrigues, and is able to silence priests and old women. Bonaparte was at once king and master. His ministers were but his clerks, the kings, his brothers, were nothing but lieutenants, and his courtiers little more than servants. His ministers and the senate were equally servile, and the *corps législatif* was even more humble than both senate and church. He indeed was an extraordinary man, and must have been a happy one, for he had not only devoted servants and faithful friends, but an obliging clergy into the bargain."

We have mentioned already that Louis, tired of the continual quarrels and intrigues of his court, retired to the interior of his palace, and allowed Monsieur de Blacas to reign in his stead. But this gentleman, with all his arrogance and egotism, understood but little of the art of governing.

The King, who preferred talking with his friends on literary or scientific subjects, used to read to them

passages from his Mémoirs. He also allowed them to admire his verses, and greatly enjoyed amusing them by his witty, but not always unequivocal, anecdotes, which was far pleasanter than holding long councils with his ministers, and indulging in useless disputes. Had he not given his people a constitution, and could not his ministers reign quite as well as he?

"They wished for liberty," the King was heard to say; "well, I gave them enough of it to disarm tyranny, but not so much as to occasion lawlessness. If I had myself fixed the amount of taxation to be raised, I should have at once become unpopular. As it is, France herself imposes the taxes; my only power is to do good and to exercise mercy. All steps disapproved of by the nation must be answered for by my ministers."

Whilst his ministers were thus reigning agreeably to the constitutional principle, and did things disapproved of by the nation, the King, who was only permitted to do good, and therefore hardly knew what to do with himself, turned his attention to questions of etiquette.

One of the most important of these questions was what fashions should be introduced at court; for it seemed impossible to adopt those of the Empire, and thus admit that some changes had been really going on since the year 1789.

There was to be a counter-revolution not only in politics, but in fashions and manners also, and weeks before the first great court of the King was to take

place the high functionaries occupied themselves with the question, What dress should be adopted on that occasion? As they were unable to solve it, the King convoked a meeting of his confidential friends, both ladies and gentlemen, who, in all secrecy, were to decide upon this important matter.

The Master of Ceremonies, a certain Marquis de Brezé, told his Majesty he considered it almost treasonable to wish for a continuation of the Imperial fashions during the reign of a legitimate king.

"So we shall have hair-powder and hoops again?" the King asked.

Monsieur de Brezé remained perfectly serious when he answered, that he was thinking day and night how to escape the difficulty, but that up to the present no idea had occurred to him which might be called worthy of the Master of Ceremonies to the most Christian King.

"Sire," said the Duke de Chartres, with a smile, "I demand the introduction of breeches, of shoes with buckles, and of bags and pigtails."

"In that case," the Prince de Poix remarked, who had remained in France during the time of the *Empire*, "I shall ask for compensation if I am compelled to return to the old fashions before my present habiliments are worn out. As to the ladies, I propose that if the noble Marquis does really insist upon their being again surrounded by a wall of petticoats and wires, we may at least be excused

from considering them guardians of virtue (vertugadin)." *

The Master of Ceremonies answered this joke only by a heavy sigh, and the King at length decided that every one should be left at liberty to dress himself either according to the old or the new fashion.

The Master of Ceremonies was obliged to submit to this decision, but he did it with great reluctance, saying, in quite a melancholy voice:

"Your Majesty may be pleased to smile, but I beg to remark that dress half makes the man, and that equality of dress, which must needs lead to confusion, is the mother of revolutionary principles."

"I see, Marquis," the King replied, with a laugh, "that you think, with Figaro, that there is many a man who defies a judge in ordinary dress, whilst he would tremble before his clerk in a flowing gown."

The Master of Ceremonies might have consoled himself for his defeat in the discussion concerning dress, for he had it all his own way in most of the other points of etiquette, which was again restored to the tyrannical sway it had enjoyed prior to the Revolution.

According to the old royal etiquette the King was never allowed to leave his bed without the assistance

* In the time of Louis XIV., the ladies of the French court used to wear round their bodies a thick roll, called *vertugadin*, which gave them the appearance of great stoutness. This curious article had been invented by the Marchioness de Montespan, when wishing to conceal her pregnancy.

of his chamberlains, and never rose until the door had been opened to all those who possessed the privilege of the *grande entrée*, which was enjoyed by the officers of the palace, the high nobility, the marshals of France, and a few favourite ladies. His Majesty's *cafétier*, his tailor, the bearer of his slippers, a barber with two assistants, the watchmaker, and the apothecary were also permitted to enter the King's bed-room.

In the presence of all these distinguished persons the King was dressed ; the only operation etiquette allowed him personally to perform being that of tying his own cravat. The King was also expected carefully to empty the pockets of the coat which he had worn on the previous day.

Another custom of old France was the public dinners "of the royal family," and this was likewise renewed. The Master of the Ceremonies was occupied for several weeks with preparations for the first of these dinners, and the King had to appoint special officers of the table, who were to perform the same social duties as such dignitaries during the old feudal system.

At these state-dinners the famous "ship" might also be seen again, which was never allowed to be missing on the royal table, and always stood before the plate of the King. During the Revolution of 1792, this valuable piece of plate, which was a present of the city of Paris to some early French monarch, had been lost, and the Master of Ceremonies had been obliged to order a new one from the court-jeweller.

This vessel, which was made of solid silver and thickly gilt, represented the wreck of a ship without masts, and contained between two golden plates, the King's table napkins scented with costly perfume. According to the old etiquette, nobody was allowed (not even the members of the royal family) to pass the "ship" without bowing, and the King's bed was the object of equal veneration.

Another custom of old France which was revived, was that of surrounding the King with "favourites."

Louis XVIII., as well as his brother, the Count d'Artois, had his favourites. Amongst those of the King, the witty and handsome Countess du Cayla held the first rank. It was her duty to amuse the sovereign, and to drive away the clouds which but too often covered his brow when confined to his arm-chair by illness or his dislike to exertion.

She used to entertain him with anecdotes taken from the *chronique scandaleuse* of the Imperial court, or to remind him of the adventures of his youth, which the King could relate with so much wit and vivacity. She also examined the letters of the "black cabinet," which the general post-office sent the King out of politeness, and read the most interesting amongst them aloud.

The King used to compare this *espionnage* with the all-hearing ear of Dionysius of Syracuse, which received information of everything that was going on.

Louis XVIII. did not neglect to show himself grateful to his interesting friend. Finding that she

was but little acquainted with the contents of Holy Scripture, he presented her with one of Royaumont's Illustrated Bibles, every one of the 150 beautiful engravings of which was covered with a thousand franc note.

On another occasion the King gave her a copy of the Constitution, again enlivening its perusal by several bank notes.

The Countess du Cayla, in return for so much generosity, patiently submitted to being called the King's snuff-box, a name which had been given her because King Louis took a particular delight in inhaling snuff which he had previously placed on the fair Countess's white shoulder.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE DRAWING-ROOM OF THE DUCHESS DE ST LEU.

Whilst in the Tuileries persons were occupying themselves with restoring the etiquette and levity of Royal France—whilst Monsieur de Blacas enjoyed in short-sighted ignorance the day of his glory, and amused himself with turning back the hands on the clock of time—time progressed.

The continual struggle of the two great political parties resulted but too soon in universal discontent, whilst Napoleon, the Emperor of Elba, was secretly making preparations for his return to France, and

keeping up a constant correspondence with several of his most devoted followers.

The army, he knew, had remained faithful to him. It was no secret to him that the soldiers, when reviewed by their new masters, would shout "Vive le Roi!" but add in a whisper, "de Rome et son petit papa."

Hortense, the new Duchess de St Leu, took little part in all this. Although still young and beautiful, she had, so to say, already done with the world. She was no longer a wife, but a mother only, and all the treasures of love and kindness that lay hidden in her heart had become the exclusive property of her children. She lived only for her sons.

In the quiet seclusion of St Leu her days were spent in study and meditation. After having painted or written during the day, or occupied herself with the education of her beloved children, she spent the evening in her drawing-room, where a few select persons would enjoy an easy and interesting conversation.

In spite of her altered position, and the comparative obscurity of her present station, Hortense still possessed friends who had remained faithful to her even while occupying distinguished places at the new court.

With such friends the Duchess de St Leu would spend her evenings in her drawing-room, talking about the happy and glorious past; and so much did she occupy herself with bygone days, that she never perceived nor even suspected the tendency which such

conversation had to provoke the hatred and excite the suspicion of a jealous and narrow-minded court.

The Duke of Otranto, who, through his cowardly and cunning temporizing, had succeeded in retaining the office of minister of police, which he had held under Napoleon, had his spies everywhere. He knew all that was going on in the different drawing-rooms of Paris, and of course was quite aware that in the salon of the Duchess de St Leu they were compensating themselves for a dull and uneventful present by the remembrances of a great past. Now Fouché, or rather the Duke of Otranto, was the sort of man who well knew how to turn everything to his own advantage.

To arouse Blacas, Louis's Premier, from his stupid carelessness and security, he expressed astonishment that the minister did not take more notice of the goings-on at the castle of St Leu, where he said they were openly conspiring against the existing government, the Bonapartists meeting there to concert measures for bringing back the Emperor from Elba. But in order to be quite safe, in case the fickle goddess should prove unusually capricious, the Duke of Otranto did not neglect at the same time to hasten to St Leu and beseech the Duchess to be on her guard. She was surrounded, he said, by numerous spies, and even apparently innocent things might admit of misrepresentation.

Hortense did not heed the warning. She considered precaution unnecessary where there was no bad intention, and seemed unwilling to deprive her-

self of the only source of consolation which was left her.

Thus the salon of the Duchess de St Leu continued to be the meeting-place of those who formerly had served the Emperor most faithfully. The Dukes of Vicenza, Bassano, Friuli, Ragusa, and Moskwa, with their wives, as well as the bold, enthusiastic Charles de Labedoyère, and the talented diplomatist, Count Regnault de Saint Jean d'Angely, were as welcome as ever at the castle of St Leu.

The accusations and suspicions against these meetings of the Bonapartists became more and more hostile and frequent in the Tuileries, and the poor Duchess, who lived unsuspectingly and peaceably in her retirement, became the victim of envy and misrepresentation on the part of those proud ladies of the old aristocracy, who could not understand how people could admire both them and her, and felt irritated that even now, under a legitimate government, there were persons who dared to assert that the Duchess was amiable, clever, and attractive. Hortense at last became aware of the height to which misrepresentation and calumny had been carried, and for the sake of her sons and of her friends she resolved upon giving them the lie.

"I must leave my charming St Leu," she said, "and go to Paris. There they can easily watch all my movements, and circumstances demand that I should listen to reason."

So she left her quiet and peaceful abode, and repaired with her children and court to the capital,

there again to occupy her old hotel in the Rue de la Victoire.

But alas! so far from silencing calumny, her coming to Paris only served to provide her enemies with new weapons.

The Bonapartists of course continued to visit at the house of the Duchess, and no entreaty or threat could induce Hortense to shut her door against the faithful friends of her family, who for this very fidelity were now persecuted.

To disarm calumny, however, and to contradict the rumour that Bonapartists only had access to her drawing-room, the Duchess resolved to throw her salon open to all strangers who were able to produce letters of recommendation, and who wished to be introduced to her. There were many who hastened to avail themselves of this permission.

A select and talented circle was soon formed around Hortense. There were the great men of the Empire, who came from old attachment, many strangers who wished to see and admire the ex-queen, and not a few of the nobles of legitimate France, who, attracted by curiosity, wished to satisfy themselves whether it was really true that the Duchess of St Leu was the clever, graceful, and fascinating lady she was so often represented to be.

Among all the strangers who desired to be presented to the Queen, one of the most marked had selected as his introducer a graceful, amiable, and kind person, whom it would have been very difficult to refuse.

It was the Duke of Wellington, who requested Monsieur Récamier to ask the Queen to receive him. The audience was eagerly granted, for Hortense at that moment was unhappy about the fate of the Emperor. According to the new measures taken with reference to the estates of the Bonapartists, it was not very probable that the treaty of April 11, executed with Napoleon, would be carried out; in fact, there was no longer any question about it, for Government was even stripping the family of the private property which on no account ought to have been taken from them.

"I wish to speak about it to Lord Wellington," the Queen said to Mademoiselle de Cochelet; "the English Government is said to be honourable, the ministers of England signed the treaty of April 11, and Lord Wellington can demand that the French Government should carry out its engagement with the Emperor. Since accident has left us in France, I wish to profit by it to remind the new rulers of the justice they ought to do the Emperor. He has surrendered all his private property, and all the crown-diamonds, which he paid for out of his own pocket, and which certainly belonged to him. According to the treaty he surrenders all this in consideration of an annuity of two millions of francs, and up to the present moment none of the engagements entered into have been fulfilled. What will become of him if he be left with no means to pay his faithful soldiers?"

When Lord Wellington waited on the Queen she spoke to him in this sense. He replied with his English *sang froid,* and his observing eyes fixed on Hortense:

"It is an injustice which the English Government will not suffer. I will remind the French Government that the treaty of Fontainebleau is sacred, and must be carried out in its integrity."

Another person who just flitted through the Queen's salon was Count Tascher, the cousin-german of the Empress Josephine. Arriving from Martinique at the age of fourteen, he was placed in the military school of Fontainebleau. On leaving the Academy, he was appointed sub-lieutenant, like all the rest, and specially ordered by the Emperor to join the 4th regiment of the line. "I place your cousin in the Infantry to teach him his profession," Napoleon said to Josephine; "for that arm is the soul of war."

Young Tascher joined his regiment at Freysengen in Bavaria, and went through the campaign of 1806 with it. This regiment, which had lost its flag at Austerlitz, and to which another had not been given for some time, having behaved well in several affairs, received a new one from the hands of Napoleon at Berlin. Tascher, who was still on foot, and enduring in spite of his youth all the fatigues of the war, was not in a position to meet the Emperor often. Still, at the beginning of the campaign, he was summoned to his Majesty's presence, as the latter was reviewing his regiment on the eve of an action.

"Do you feel frightened?" the Emperor asked him.

"No, sire," the young man answered.

"Do you think you will be killed?"

"No, sire!"

"And if you did think so, what would you do?"

"I would still go on, but with less heart."

"Well then, go on, nothing will happen to you."

Two days prior to the battle of Eylau, after a brilliant cavalry affair, in which an aide-de-camp of the Emperor Alexander was made prisoner, as the 4th line regiment happened to be passing head-quarters, Tascher was again summoned to the Emperor's presence. He was in the room when the captured aide-de-camp was brought in.

"Your master," the Emperor said to the prisoner, "has not had enough of war then? Your young officers of the court do not find it sufficiently long or murderous. They flatter themselves they will conquer us, but they must undeceive themselves, for the French army has different motives from yours to insure its triumph. Look at this young man, all covered with mud, who marches on foot with his regiment, he is cousin-german to the Empress Josephine. Well! he has no favour to hope except what he deserves; with such elements the French army is invincible."

At the battle of Eylau, the 4th of the line was almost entirely destroyed. When the Emperor inspected it the next morning he appeared saddened by the sight. He seemed to be searching for young Tascher, and not being able to discover him, he inquired with interest what had become of the young soldier. On

hearing that he was slightly wounded, he sent for him, and made him *sous-officier d'ordonnance*. His state of suffering and denudation did not seem at all to surprise him; he merely said:

"For a Creole this is rather hard, is it not, Tascher? but you have done your duty. I am satisfied, and your worst turn has passed. What do you want now—have you any shirts?"

"No, sire, I have only the one I have been wearing for the last ten days."

"I cannot give you one," the Emperor replied, "for I have none either; but I shall send you to Warsaw, where you will have money to buy some."

He gave him an order signed by himself, without any fixed sum, and the young man only took fifty napoleons. He served through the Spanish and Russian campaigns, as aide-de-camp to Prince Eugène, to whom he remained attached till his death.

It was natural that the Duchess's drawing-room in Paris should afford even more material for town-talk and slander than the parties at the château of St Leu. The old princesses and duchesses, who with their long pedigrees, their prejudices, and antiquated pretensions, used to assemble in the Faubourg St Germain, furious at being obliged to listen to the tale of Hortense's increasing celebrity, sought their revenge in increased hostility.

They did not content themselves any longer in their parties with denouncing her court, but began attacking her in the press.

Hortense was the incarnate recollection of the

Empire, and for that reason must be destroyed. Pamphlets and libels were published, in which the King was exhorted to be on his guard against the dangerous woman who openly, and under the very eyes of Government, was organizing a conspiracy in favour of the fallen Emperor. He was advised to banish her not only from Paris, but from the country altogether, and to include in this exile her children, the two "Napoleons," for to allow them to remain in France was "making the country suckle the wolves which one day would devour it."

Hortense took no notice of these calumnies and slanders. She was too much accustomed to being misunderstood and wrongly judged, to give herself the trouble to care any longer about such things. She well knew that calumnies are best combated by silent contempt. Defence, so far from disarming them, is only productive of new material for misrepresentation.

Hortense herself utterly despised slander and backbiting. She would never suffer any one to tell her things about others which could be prejudicial to them. One day, while still occupying the throne of Holland, a Dutch lady tried to poison her mind against one of her own countrywomen whom she accused of belonging to the Orange party.

"Madame," the Queen interrupted her, "I am a stranger to all parties alike; I receive all persons as equally entitled to my friendship, for I like to think well of everybody. I feel unfavourably impressed with those only who try to prejudice me against

others." And yet Hortense herself had always been the butt of calumny and misrepresentation.

"I lived with Queen Hortense," says Mademoiselle de Cochelet in her Mémoires, "for five and twenty years, and during that time never left her; but I never for a moment perceived in her the slightest feeling of ill-will against any one. She was always good, always gentle, taking an interest in everybody who was unfortunate, and invariably anxious to afford assistance. And this good and noble-hearted woman was always the object of intense hatred and absurd calumnies, having no other protection than the purity of her intentions, and the honesty and straightforwardness of her actions."

Hortense did not even think of contradicting the calumnies that were spread abroad about her. Her mind at that time was occupied with wholly different things.

A messenger of her husband, who was then living in Florence, had made his appearance to demand in the name of Louis Bonaparte his two sons. After long negotiations he declared his willingness to be satisfied if Hortense would consent to let him have the eldest child, Napoleon Louis.

But the affectionate mother could not, or would not, endure the thought of separation even from one of her sons, and as entreaties and supplications proved ineffectual to shake the resolution of her husband, who seemed determined not to leave the education of both to her, she resolved, almost driven

to despair, to have recourse to extreme measures, in order to secure to herself the possession of her children.

She firmly told the messenger, therefore, that she refused to part with her sons, and claimed at the same time the protection of the law in her endeavour to keep what was her own. She declared that the princes could not be forced to give up their rights as citizens of France by any private compulsion to go into exile.

Thus, while the Duchess de St Leu was accused of plotting in favour of Napoleon, her whole mind was taken up with the lawsuit that was to decide whether her two sons should be left her. The only conspiracies in which she may probably have indulged were organized with the aid of lawyers, and directed against her own husband.

But the calumnies, accusations, and libels in the papers, nevertheless, continued. Her friends at last considered it necessary to show the Duchess one of those hostile articles, in order to obtain her permission to reply to it.

Hortense read the paper with a melancholy smile, and then gave it back.

"It is a painful thing," she said, "to find oneself slandered by one's own countrymen, but it would be useless to reply. I know how to console myself under such attacks; they affect me but little."

On the following day there appeared in the same paper which had contained the scandalous article, an open and infamous attack upon Louis Bonaparte,

Hortense's husband. On this occasion she felt extremely angry. Forgetting all her disputes, all her unhappiness, and even the lawsuit which she was carrying on against Louis Bonaparte, she only remembered that he who had been so cowardly attacked, and who was not present to defend himself, was the father of her children.

"I feel revolted," she said, "and wish Monsieur Despré to answer this article immediately. If paternal and motherly affection have occasioned a dispute which makes us appear to be enemies, nobody has a right to meddle with it, and it is no discredit to either of us. I should be extremely sorry if people were to avail themselves of this unhappy dispute as a pretext to insult the father of my children and the noble name he bears. It is my duty to stand up for him, as he is absent. I wish to see M. Despré immediately, and will tell him how to answer the infamous article."

On the following day there appeared in the papers an eloquent and witty article in favour of Louis Napoleon, which shamed and silenced his accusers. The warmly-defended prince probably never knew that this article owed its existence to his wife.

CHAPTER XXX.

AN INTERVIEW WITH LOUIS XVIII.

The Queen at length made up her mind that she ought to visit Louis XVIII., because he had signed the treaty of April 11th, and the letters patent of the Duchy of St Leu. She said to her companion:

"I should do wrong not to pay him a visit of thanks, which, at this moment, has become necessary for my security. Those who invent such stories about me, do so because they fancy they will cause pleasure at court, whose obstinate enemy they suppose me to be. When it is known that I have seen the King, they will no longer dare to say such things, and I shall be forgotten. Moreover, such a step will prove to the Bourbon family that, if I wished to intrigue against them, I would not have remained in France at their mercy, and that, as I have decided on seeing them, it is because I am incapable of injuring them."

"Then you will not follow the advice of the Emperor of Russia, Madame," said Mlle de Cochelet, "who was so dissatisfied with the slight favour shown you, and expressly bade me say to you, 'Tell the Queen not to take any step to display her gratitude. They will not receive her properly, for they have not the nobility to be to her what they ought

to be.' These were his very words, as I distinctly remember."

"You know that I never blindly follow the advice of any one: I have but one counsellor, my conscience; am I acting rightly or wrongly? When I am able to say to myself, 'I am doing right,' all that may result from it is a matter of indifference to me, or, at least, I have the strength to endure the consequences. In the present circumstances, the Emperor of Russia took an interest in me, and arranged my remaining in France, which I should not have done had it not been for my sad private position, my love of my country, and the wishes of my mother. But it was the King of France whom the Emperor of Russia employed to be useful to me, willingly or unwillingly, that does not concern me. It was he who signed the paper permitting me to remain in France, and it is he, therefore, whom I ought to thank. I never wish to appear to act unfairly to any one, and do not find the advice of the Emperor of Russia consistent. He made me contract obligations, and does not wish me to offer my thanks for them. He fears that I may not be received properly, but what do I care? If there be the slightest impropriety, I retire; and then not I, but those whom I wished to thank, and who have insulted me, shall be in the wrong."

The Queen, when she had once made up her mind, asked for a private audience of the King, and at once obtained it. Her companion went with her to the Tuileries and waited while she entered the King's

private cabinet, which had formerly been the Emperor's. In seeing again all that had formerly been familiar to her, but not the man whom she regarded as a father, and whose place was now occupied by her enemy, her heart beat violently. When she came out again the courtiers flocked round her.

"Well, Madame," the Duke de Grammont asked her, "are you satisfied with our King?"

"Extremely so!" the Queen answered. All faces expanded with joy, and every one rushed forward to lead her to her carriage. As soon as they were alone, it was Mademoiselle de Cochelet's turn to ask whether she had really been pleased with the King.

"It was impossible to be more so," she answered, "he was excessively polite, even gallant towards me. At first he was greatly embarrassed, and I was obliged to be the first to speak, but when you have any thanks to offer, nothing is more easy. He produced on me the impression of being a good man."

"And yet, Madame, he has the reputation of being very false."

"I was told so, and yet I did not notice it; on the contrary, it is possible that an aged and infirm man always inspires interest when he assumes a paternal air. It was perhaps his embarrassed air that at once set me at my ease, but I felt much more so than I ever did with the Emperor Napoleon. That is not surprising, for personal grandeur imposes on everybody, and even on me, who was his daughter; I never dared speak to him save when he addressed me. While speaking to the King I fancied

however, he insinuated a desire that I should pay a visit to the Duchesse d'Angoulême. She is doubtless a respectable and interesting personage, but I have no reason for waiting upon her. I only owed an act of politeness to the sovereign recognized by the country I inhabit, and I clearly manifested to him my purpose of absolute retirement. When he spoke of the pleasure he would feel in seeing me again, I answered that I no longer looked on myself as an inhabitant of this world, and that the greatest isolation suited me best. He also spoke of my mother and of my brother, whom he praised; but his family is said to be so full of hatred towards all connected with the Empire, that I shall certainly not attempt to come in contact with it."

It is true that what was said about this hatred was not reassuring. In addition to more serious things, it was stated that all the tradespeople breveted by the Emperor or the princesses, and who had put up their arms as a sign, on asking the same favour of the Duchesse d'Angoulême, had been ordered to take these arms to the Tuileries, in order that she might judge what was claimed of the new sovereigns.

The laughter and jests in the salon of the Duchesse d'Angoulême had been unending; it was doubtless considered most absurd that *parvenus* should have dared to assume arms, and more particularly, such insignia as an eagle, a lion, but, above all, an Imperial and Royal crown. It was certainly painful for those who bore the lilies, but after such a Revolution as that of 1792, it was not ridiculous. Hence,

when Queen Hortense was told of this laughter, she said:

"It is not only in bad taste, but it proves that they have not studied the new institutions of the country, and fancy they find it as they left it; but they must grow accustomed to the emancipation of France, if they wish to govern it."

Hortense's visit created an immense sensation among the courtiers. The King's head was quite turned; he only spoke of the Queen's wit, tact, and grace, with such enthusiasm, that the members of his family at length said to him:

"Arrange a divorce, and marry her, since you consider her so delightful."

Madame Campan, the Queen's former school-mistress, soon made her way to St Leu, with a budget of news she had picked up from a gentleman of the bed-chamber. She told the Queen the following anecdotes:

"When the King was being undressed, he did nothing but praise you; he said, 'I am a good judge, and I never met a woman who combines so much grace with such distiuguished manners.'

"Every one listened in silence.

"'Yes,' the Duke de Duras at length remarked, 'she is a person whom everybody is agreed to consider charming, but it is very unfortunate, and perhaps to be feared, that she is only surrounded by persons known to be your Majesty's relentless foes.'

"When he ceased speaking, the King did not say a word, but dismissed his people.

"So you must be prudent, my dear angel," Madame Campan continued, "there is nothing so dangerous as to be praised by kings when they have no reason to support us: they create enemies by the jealousy they arouse, and rarely try to defend us against those whose animosity they have drawn on us; I know better than any one what power enemies at court possess, and I implore you to guard against them."

"Perhaps you are right, Madame," the Queen replied, "but what have I to fear from them? I neither wish to supplant them, nor to see the King. I defy them to find in my conduct a single flaw that their calumny can assail, and what is not true easily falls."

But the calumniators were intolerable. One instance of their perverse ingenuity was the following. The lower classes had a habit of saying to each other, "The little corporal will come to deliver us with the violets,"—that is to say, in Spring. The prevalence of this remark was distorted into a Bonapartist conspiracy on the part of Hortense, particularly as she was passionately fond of Parma violets, very scarce in those days, and bouquets of which were daily sent her from St Leu by her gardener.

Another calumny that greatly excited the Queen was connected with the murder of a General named Quénel. On the discovery of his body in the Seine, it was gravely asserted that he had been assassinated by the Bonapartists, because they feared he would betray the conspiracy at the head of which the

Duchess de St Leu stood. On reflection the Duchess only laughed at the calumny, considering it unworthy of further attention. We could multiply instances, but these are sufficient to show how far party-zeal carried her enemies.

For a season, however, the Duchess was left at peace, the court being engaged with a great event. After many a fruitless effort the remains of the unfortunate royal couple, who during the time of the Revolution had paid with their lives for the crimes of their predecessors rather than their own, were discovered. Following the directions of those who in the Reign of Terror had been eye-witnesses to the melancholy burial of the royal martyrs, the body of Louis XVI. was found in a lonely corner of the cemetery of St Roche, while that of the Queen was discovered in another part of the burial-ground.

It was the natural and justifiable wish of the King to inter these corpses in the vaults of the royal tomb at St Denis, and it does credit to his moderation that he resolved upon doing it quietly and without the usual show. His fine political tact told him that it would not be wise to use the remains of the unhappy couple for the purpose of a political demonstration.

But the King's court, and his relations as well as the ministers and courtiers at large, who in pompously interring the murdered king and his wife wished to punish and humiliate their political enemies rather than gratify a feeling of loyal piety, insisted upon a public and splendid funeral, and he

who by his own confession was "the king but not the master," was obliged to yield to them.

Soon afterwards preparations began to be made for the solemn and pompous burial of the royal corpses, which was to take place on the 21st of January, 1815. This day was one full of melancholy reminiscences for the family of the Bourbons, for it was the anniversary of Louis XVI.'s death.

Monsieur de Châteaubriand, the talented and devoted panegyrist of the Bourbons, wrote an article for the *Journal des Debats*, in which he announced in enthusiastic words the approaching solemnity. This article created so much sensation amongst the Parisians that it was reprinted, and 30,000 copies were sold in one day.

On the 20th of January the graves of the "royal martyrs" were opened, and all the members of the reigning family who were present on the occasion knelt down in prayer together with the thousands of spectators that had followed them.

But the King had been quite right. The solemnity, which in the eyes of one party was nothing but an act of justice, was looked upon by the other as a deliberate insult, calculated to remind them of the days of blindness and fanaticism, during which, like most others, they had allowed themselves to be carried away by the excitement of the time.

A great many of the members of the Convention who had voted for the death of the King were still living in Paris, or even (as, for example, Fouché) at the court of Louis XVIII., and by all these the ap-

proaching solemnity was regarded as a deep humiliation.

"Have you heard," said Descourtis, rushing into the room of Cambacères, "do you know that the solemnity is really to take place to-morrow? Yes, to-morrow is the great day, to-morrow they will expose us to the daggers of the fanatics. Is this the amnesty which they promised us?"

"Well," said the Count de Père, who was just then with Cambacères, and who belonged to the Royalist party, "I was not aware that the Constitution contained a clause prohibiting the removal of the mortal remains of the unhappy king. I think the court is not doing anything illegal."

"They want to excite the people," Descourtis replied, pale with terror, "they wish to stir up the remembrance of bygone things, and to bring a silent accusation against us. But the day may come when power will be ours again, and then we will remember it."

Cambacères had listened to this dialogue without saying a syllable; but he now approached the ex-member of the Convention, and gently taking his hand, said, in a solemn voice:

"My dear friend, I wish we were allowed to appear in mourning to-morrow, and to follow the funeral car with a torch in our hands. I think we owe France and ourselves this token of repentance."

On the following day the solemn burial took place.

All Paris turned out to look at the funeral procession, the Bonapartists as well as the Royalists, not even the old Republicans excepted, thus showing that they recognized the errors of the past, and repented of their sins.

The procession moved on at a slow pace amidst the peals of all the church bells, the thunder of artillery, and the sacred chants of the clergy who marched at its head.

On the canopy that overhung the funeral car could be seen a glittering crown. The grand emblem of royalty had fallen from the brow of the living, and the car of the dead was now ornamented with it.

Slowly and solemnly the procession defiled, until it had arrived on the Boulevard which separates the two streets that bear the name of *Montmartre.*

What means the sudden and almost universal cry that testifies surprise and terror ?

The crown on the top of the car had fallen down into the glistening snow of the street after having heavily rolled over the coffins !

This happened on the 21st of January. Two months afterwards, at the same hour, and on the same day, the crown of Louis XVIII. fell from his brow, and was placed once more on that of Napoleon.

CHAPTER XXXI.

NAPOLEON'S RETURN FROM ELBA.

A MIGHTY message flashed through the capital of France in the first days of March, 1815, and all France, all Europe, re-echoed it. "Napoleon has left Elba! Napoleon has embarked, and will soon be in France!"

The Royalists heard it with dismay; the Bonapartists with a delight which they hardly attempted to conceal.

The Queen had been paying a visit in the Faubourg St Germain, when Lord Kinnaird rode up to her, and told her that the Emperor had disembarked from Elba. She turned pale as death, and bade the coachman stop.

"What! is it possible?" the Queen said to his Lordship; "who told you that? So many absurd rumours are flying about."

"I am positive," Lord Kinnaird replied; "I have just left the Duc d'Orleans on the point of setting out after the Comte d'Artois, who started last night."

"Ah, Heavens!" the Queen exclaimed, "what misfortunes this will entail on the Emperor, on France, on ourselves!—I dare not think of it."

"Measures are well taken; all the troops are being sent over there. The Emperor has but few people with him, it is said, and it will sooner be over."

"To die thus under the fire of French arms—he! the Emperor! it is frightful," the Queen continued in great emotion. "He cannot have committed such an act of imprudence. The news must be false."

"Be assured, Madame, of what I tell you. The source whence I obtained the information is certain; people are fearfully agitated at court, and the most vigorous measures will be taken against the avowed partisans of Napoleon."

"Do you believe that my children will be in any danger?"

"I will not answer that they may not be taken as hostages; it would be a very natural step—"

"Great Heavens! in what a position have I placed them!"

The Queen's eyes filled with tears; but overcoming her emotion, she added:

"No! the French people will not allow any harm to be done to them."

"The people," Lord Kinnaird said, "will become frightful, and especially towards us English, for we need not try to deceive ourselves, they have remained attached to the Emperor, and might easily get rid of us *en masse*."

"Oh no! do not believe that! they are no longer the same people as in '93. But if you entertain the slightest alarm for your wife and children, I, who have nothing to fear from the people, offer you my house as an asylum. I am going home at once to watch over the safety of my children."

The Queen arranged with Mademoiselle de Cochelet

that the two boys should be sent to the country-house of an old friend till the crisis had passed. At night-fall her faithful companion, entering the room of the princes, led them on foot through the garden; the nurse of the younger boy, who was constantly with him, following them with a bundle. The valet had gone to fetch a *fiacre*, which was waiting at some distance from the house.

"Where are you taking us?" Prince Napoleon asked Mademoiselle de Cochelet; "why must we hide ourselves? Is there any danger, and does mamma remain exposed to it?"

"No, my prince, it is only yourselves who may be exposed to it; she has nothing to fear."

"Very good," the young prince replied, who was so advanced for his age that Mademoiselle de Cochelet often found herself talking to him as to a grown-up person.

The Queen had requested that the boys should not be informed of their uncle's landing. Hence they allowed themselves to be led, they knew not whither or wherefore. This act of mystery, this novelty for them of going out at night, was even regarded as a source of pleasure, in which, however, they silently indulged, for they understood that they were being hidden, and must avoid making any noise.

When this great affair was satisfactorily carried out, the Queen resigned herself to her fate; but her heart was filled with sorrow and forebodings of evil.

"I greatly deplore the resolution of the Emperor,"

she said ; "I would give everything I possess to have prevented his return to France, because I feel convinced that there is no hope of success for him. Many will declare themselves in his favour, many against him, and we shall have a deplorable civil war, amongst whose victims the Emperor may possibly be numbered himself."

Meanwhile the excitement continued to increase, everybody being so carried away by it, that no one in these days would have been able to give cool and reasonable advice.

The old followers of the Emperor came *en masse* to the Duchess de St Leu, asking her for advice, assistance, and encouragement, and accusing her of indifference and ingratitude, because, not sharing their sanguine expectations, she was sad whilst they rejoiced.

The government spies, however, who surrounded the house of the Queen, not aware of the state of Hortense's feelings, and only seeing the former generals and councillors of Napoleon daily entering her hôtel, concluded that she must be the leader of the conspiracy that was to bring the Emperor back to France.

The Queen saw the danger of her position, but what could she do to escape it?

"I find myself surrounded by nothing but doubt and confusion," she was heard to say, "and can discover no means of extricating myself from them. I must therefore arm myself with courage, and this I have already done."

The government of the King still hoped to allay

the approaching tempest, to be able to turn the tide of revolution, and to bury those who unchained it beneath the retreating waves.

They treated the great and decisive event as a petty plot, discovered in good time, and therefore but little dangerous. Above all, they were anxious to secure the persons of the "conspirators," a name under which were comprised all who in their hearts were known to have remained faithful to the Emperor.

They were all to be imprisoned.

The police began an extensive persecution of the Imperialists. Numerous spies constantly watched the houses of all the officers, dukes, and princes of the Empire, who were supposed to be friendly to Napoleon's interests, and it was frequently in disguise only, and through all sorts of stratagems, that they escaped the hands of the *huissiers*.

The Duchess was at last compelled to yield to the reiterated entreaties of her friends, who earnestly besought her to look out for a place of refuge during this time of danger and uncertainty.

It was arranged that she should proceed to the house of her brother's old nurse, a native of Martinique, who had accompanied the Empress Josephine, when she was brought to France at the age of fifteen by her father to marry the Vicomte de Beauharnois.

This good Mimi, as the Queen and Prince Eugène always called her through old associations, had married a M. Lefebvre, who held a small appointment in a government office, which, with a pension paid by

the Emperor's children to the old woman, insured to these worthy people a comfortable existence.

It was decided that the Queen, having obtained refuge with this old nurse, should then await the dénouement of the terrible drama in which she was made to play so active a part, and of which she was destined to be the principal and innocent victim. The most difficult thing was for her to leave her house without being recognized. She proposed to take the arm of M. Devreaux, but the idea was rejected, because an officer of hers might be remarked, and perhaps followed. Mlle de Cochelet proposed her brother Adrien, who often called to take her to her mother's; but the Queen exclaimed that she could not dare to go out alone with a young man: it would appear to her the most extraordinary thing in the world, and her embarrassment would be so great that the spies must notice her. What was to be done? Mlle de Cochelet at last suggested that the Queen should put on her clothes and pass for her, to which Hortense consented.

Up to this time they had not thought of dress. The Queen happened to wear on this day a very elegant morning wrapper, trimmed with elegant lace. This had to be hidden under her companion's dust-coloured cloak. When the Queen, thus disguised, gave her arm to young de Cochelet, she began laughing so heartily that it appeared as if there was to be no end to it. She would not go out, she said; she forgot her position, her spies, and only thought of what people would say.

"If any one recognizes me alone with a young man, what will be thought of me?" she said, and in her embarrassment she had recourse to laughing again.

At length the strange couple set out, and Mlle de Cochelet anxiously awaited her brother's return. The following is his account of the walk:—

"Why did you allow the Queen to go out in that lace gown, which embarrassed her all along the road? When we passed the corner of the Boulevard, some men examined us very closely, and I did not feel at all comfortable. I certainly lowered the umbrella on the side of the Queen; but as she is not so tall as you, people could not be deceived, and I trembled lest we should be followed. To heighten the embarrassment, the Queen did nothing but laugh. In vain did I say to her: 'Madame, your lace shows; ladies do not walk so elegantly dressed, and, moreover, you have satin slippers on.' At this her laughter was redoubled, and she replied, 'I had not time to think of all that, and I cannot walk with all these cloaks, one over the other.'"

On reaching her destination in safety, the Queen was obliged to hide herself in a garret on the fifth floor, with hardly any furniture in it. She was a most difficult prisoner to manage, for she required movement so much, that she insisted on going for a walk on the Boulevard, which she could see from her window.

"My legs ache," she said to her companions, "from remaining so long without walking, and if I take the

air at my window, you both cry out to prevent me. Ah, how I pity poor prisoners! If I ever have any power again, I will remember this torture, and there shall not be a single prisoner in my empire."

Another remark make by the Queen is worthy of quotation. Mademoiselle de Cochelet had told her that Lord Kinnaird had conducted Madame Lallemand to the Tuileries, that she might ask the King to spare her husband, who had been arrested, but that she could obtain nothing. The Queen remarked:

"These English dare to be men: I can understand their being envied their liberty, and that everybody should strive to obtain the same. A Frenchman would never have ventured to present himself with the wife of a condemned man. It is true, though, that he would ruin himself. Hence, the institutions are bad, for they compel a man to consult his paltry interests, instead of leaving him at liberty to develope his most noble qualities."

Even the Duke of Otranto, who was suspected, and not unjustly, of having again turned Imperialist, was to have been arrested. He managed, however, to escape the hands of the police and fled. General Lavalette, who had discovered that Hortense's house was no longer watched after the spies had found out that she had made her escape, availed himself of this circumstance to use it as a hiding-place. Monsieur de Dandré, the chief of the police, who had the direction of the arrests, was greatly mortified, and was heard to say:

"I cannot find any more of these conspirators.

People have talked too much of the approaching arrest of the Bonapartists, and they have thus been enabled to escape."

All of a sudden intelligence reached the excited and turbulent capital "that the Emperor had landed at Grenoble, that he had been received with enthusiasm by the people, and that the troops who, under the command of Charles de Labedoyère, had been sent to capture him, had one and all gone over to his side. Grenoble had opened her gates at his approach, everywhere he was received with open arms, and now he was no longer at the head of a little band only, but of an army, whose ranks were swelling every hour. The government tried once more to deceive, by means of the press, the inhabitants of Paris, and make them believe what they knew to be untrue.

Already the cry of "Vive l'Empereur" could be heard again; Marengo, Arcola, Jena, and Austerlitz were not yet forgotten; Napoleon was still the victorious hero who ruled destiny, and compelled it for a season to smile on him.

A general panic seized upon the Royalists, who formed the most desperate resolutions; but when they heard that Napoleon had already arrived at Lyons, where he had again been received enthusiastically, both by the population and the garrison, they began to despair.

The heads of the Royalist party assembled at the house of the Count de la Père to deliberate on the measures that were to be adopted. Persons who otherwise were hostile to each other, and belonged to

different political parties, agreeing only in the one point of hatred against Napoleon, were to be seen meeting in the same room, to uphold the dynasty of the Bourbons, and to unite their efforts in defence of their rights.

There were Madame de Staël, Benjamin Constant, Count Lainé, and Châteaubriand; there were the Duke de Némours and the Count de la Père; and around them a crowd of frightened Royalists, hoping to hear from the lips of these illustrious personages words of encouragement and advice, which would restore life and confidence to the despairing party.

Benjamin Constant was the first to speak.

"Power," he said, "must be combated by power. Bonaparte is strong through the love of his soldiers, and he can only be defeated by the hatred of the citizens. His features are imposing, like the countenance of Cæsar, and we must therefore send against him a man possessed of the same advantages. General Lafayette would be the proper man for the supreme command of the French army."

Monsieur de Châteaubriand demanded that the first act of government should be the severe punishment of the short-sighted and negligent ministers who had done nothing to prevent this catastrophe, while Lainé, with tears in his eyes, and a voice trembling with emotion, declared that everything was lost.

"There is but one last chance," he said, "to awe the usurper. We must prepare for him a spectacle of despair and grief on his return to France. When he approaches the capital, the inhabitants of Paris—men,

women, and children, the national guard, and all the corporations—must leave the city and witness the entry of Napoleon in saddened silence. This despairing million, miserable only for his sake, will not fail to affect him deeply, and he will feel terrified at the idea that a whole nation should flee before a single individual."

Madame de Staël pronounced an eloquent anathema against the usurper, who was lighting the torch of a civil war that would cause unspeakable misery to bleeding France.

Every one felt moved and enthusiastic, but nothing to the purpose was done. All the fine words and speeches that flowed from the lips of these celebrated writers and statesmen were but the report of a physician who is giving up his patient as lost. The patient on this occasion was France, and the Royalists who had assembled in the house of Count de la Père began to feel that nothing could save her, and that all they could do was to go into exile and lament her fate.

Whilst the Royalists were still deliberating, or weeping and despairing, King Louis had preserved his usual composure and self-command. It must be remembered that the real state of things had been, for a long time, hidden from him. Of course he knew that Napoleon was in France, but his courtiers had told him that the people received him everywhere with dissatisfied silence, and that the army, faithful to their oath to the King, failed to obey his summons.

Thus it happened that the shouts of joy which marked the march of the Emperor found no echo in the Tuileries. The King was labouring under a gross delusion, the natural offspring of the misrepresentations of those who surrounded him. When on the 16th of March he went to the Chamber of Deputies to address them in an encouraging speech, he was surrounded by a crowd that received him with enthusiasm. This crowd, however, was not the people, but an artificial demonstration of the Royalists. The proud gentlemen and ladies of the old nobility had again condescended, as on the day of Louis's entry into Paris, to play the part which the people seemed unwilling to accept, and furnished the material for a crowd to make the King believe in the loyalty of the nation.

The King allowed himself to be deceived. Monsieur de Blacas continued telling him of new victories, whilst in reality Napoleon was inflicting defeat upon defeat. The Royalists even went so far as to assert that Lyons had closed its gates against the Emperor, and that Ney, who had been sent against him, had sworn to bring him to Paris in an iron cage—which, by the way, was an utter falsehood.

The King, therefore, was quiet and composed in the midst of the danger, when suddenly his brother, the Count d'Artois, and the Duke of Orleans, whom he thought victorious at Lyons, arrived as fugitives in the capital. They had been deserted by their soldiers and servants, and informed the King that Lyons had received the Emperor with open arms, and that

they had both been compelled to a precipitate flight.

A second and still more terrible piece of news soon followed this alarming intelligence. Ney, the last hope of the King, the only remaining support of his tottering throne, unable to fight against his old companion in arms, had gone over to the Emperor, and the whole army had followed his example.

Now at last the scales fell from the King's eyes. He had a full insight into the real state of things, and saw how cruelly he had been deceived.

"Bonaparte," he exclaimed, "fell because he would not hear the truth, and I shall fall because I am not allowed to hear it."

At this moment, and whilst the King was entreating his brothers and the other gentlemen of his court to deceive him no longer, but to tell him the plain truth, the door opened and in came Blacas, who had never yet ceased to be full of confidence and hope, but was now pale and trembling.

His features betrayed to the King what the minister had long sought to hide from his eyes. His Majesty had asked his court to tell him the truth; it now stood before him in the shape of his trembling minister.

There was a deadly silence. Every eye was fixed upon the Count, who sobbing with emotion thus addressed the King:

"Sire, all is lost!—The army as well as the people are betraying your Majesty. There is nothing left but to quit Paris."

The King staggered back and cast a searching glance round the group that stood about him. Not a single eye dared to meet his, for there was none that could cheer him with a ray of hope. His courtiers, with their eyes fixed on the ground, remained speechless.

The King understood their mute answer. A deep-drawn sigh struggled from his breast.

"Well," he at last exclaimed, "the tree bears its proper fruit. You have wished me to govern for you only, now I shall have none at all to reign over. But mark me, if I ever again should return to the throne of my fathers, I will remember the experience you have made me buy so dearly."

A few hours afterwards, when night had begun to spread her dark cloak over Paris, the King, accompanied only by his Premier and a few servants, left the Tuileries and fled to Holland.

Exactly 24 hours later, on the evening of the 20th of March, Napoleon entered the capital amidst enthusiastic shouts of "Vive l'Empereur." He at once took possession of the Tuileries, and where but yesterday the lily-spangled banner of the Bourbons had been floating in the air, the victorious tricolor, the proud palladium of the Empire, was once more seen.

In the Tuileries the Emperor found assembled most of his former ministers, generals, and courtiers, all anxious to greet their old master again. The crowd at the foot of the stairs and in the corridors of the royal residence was immense.

The Emperor was lifted from the ground and passed along over the heads of thousands until he reached his former rooms. The shouting on all sides was almost deafening, and the air rang with the incessant cry of "Vive l'Empereur!"

On reaching his apartments the Emperor was received by Queen Julie, the wife of Joseph Bonaparte, and by Hortense, who had at last left her hiding-place and hastened to the Tuileries in order to welcome Napoleon.

The Emperor received Hortense with a cold salutation. He inquired but negligently after the health of her sons, adding in an almost angry tone:

"You have placed my nephews in a false position by leaving them in the midst of my enemies."

Hortense turned pale, and her eyes filled with tears, but the Emperor did not seem to notice it.

"You have accepted the kindnesses of my enemies," Napoleon continued, "and placed yourself under obligations to the Bourbons. But I count upon Eugène. I hope he will soon be here. I have written to him from Lyons already."

Such was the reception bestowed on Hortense by the returning Emperor. He was angry with her because she had remained in France; and the Bourbons, whilst on their road to Holland, said:

"It is all the fault of this Duchess of St Leu. Her intrigues alone have enabled Napoleon to return to France."

The first thing the Queen did after her meeting

with the Emperor was to write to her brother Eugène. This letter is memorable, because it eventually gave rise to the most culpable intrigues against her.

"My dear Eugène, an enthusiasm, of which you can form no idea, brings the Emperor back to France. I have just seen him. He received me very coldly. I think he disapproves of my having stayed here. He told me that he counted on you, and had written to you from Lyons. Good Heavens! I trust we shall not have war! It will not come, I hope, from the Emperor of Russia, for he deplored it so greatly. Ah! beseech him for peace; employ your influence with him, it is a necessity for humanity. I hope I shall see you again soon. I was obliged to hide myself for twelve days, as so many stories were in currency about me. Adieu! I am dead of fatigue."

Such was the letter which was seized by the Congress of Vienna, and regarded as a proof of Hortense's active participation in the affairs of France. It all but sent the Viceroy to a Moravian fortress, and estranged the Emperor of Russia from the Queen.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE HUNDRED DAYS.

The hundred days that followed the Emperor's return will ever appear in history like a myth, or an

Homeric poem, in which heroes with one blow of their hand destroy worlds, call forth armies by stamping on the ground, or with a breath let nations wither away and others spring into existence.

These hundred days are a gigantic epic written on the page of history. All that the world possesses of greatness, splendour, and magnificence, of victory and success, and all the misery, humiliation, and shame to be found in the annals of mortality, are contained in the hundred days which witnessed the restoration of the empire.

Great and promising was their beginning. All France seemed to rejoice at the Emperor's return. Everybody hastened to assure him of his unchanging fidelity, and to represent the obedience which had been paid to the Bourbons as a painful necessity.

The old splendour of the Imperial household was restored at the Tuileries. The Emperor re-assembled his court, which was almost the same as formerly, with this difference only, that instead of Marie Louise, who had failed to return with her husband, Hortense presided in the drawing-room, and her two sons were called upon to take the place of the King of Rome in the demonstrations which were made to arouse the popular enthusiasm.

Napoleon tried to avert the wrath of the Emperor Alexander at his return, by sending him a document found at the Tuileries among the papers of the Duke de Blacas, which the hurried nature of his departure prevented that minister from carrying away or destroying. It was a treaty of alliance completed between

England, France, and Austria against Russia, the result of the protracted squabbles at the Congress of Vienna. But Alexander was not to be turned from his purpose, even by the knowledge of this act of treachery; all the revenge he took was to send for Metternich, and show him the treaty in the presence of Stein, the Prussian minister. Then he threw it into the fire, saying, "Let us speak no more about it, we have something better to do."

The Emperor's anger with Hortense had soon been followed by a speedy reconciliation. He could not help listening to the satisfactory explanations of the Queen, who showed him that her only motive in remaining in France had been the wish to secure the future of her sons. Napoleon stretched out his hand in token of forgiveness, at the same time begging her to ask a favour of him, by the bestowal of which he might manifest his friendly feelings towards her.

Hortense, who had been so cruelly and perseveringly slandered by the Royalists, and whom the flying Bourbons even now cursed as the author of all their misfortunes, begged the Emperor to allow the Duchess of Orleans, whom the fracture of a leg had retained in Paris, to remain in the capital, and to grant her a pension. The Queen told Napoleon that she had received a letter from the Duchess, in which her mediation was solicited to obtain for her this favour "in her greatly distressed situation."

The Emperor granted the wish of his step-daughter. It was owing to her mediation alone that the Duchess

of Orleans, the mother of that Louis Philippe who afterwards became King of France, obtained a pension of 40,000 francs a year. A few days later an annuity of 200,000 francs was granted to another lady of the Bourbon family—the Duchess of Bourbon, who had reason to feel obliged to Hortense. Both ladies hastened to assure her, in a most flattering letter, of their eternal gratitude.

Hortense, who felt intense satisfaction at seeing her wish granted, was radiant with joy, and as proud as if she had gained a great victory.

"It was my sacred duty," she afterwards said, "to help these ladies. They were helpless and alone, as I myself had been a few days before, and I know from experience how sad that is."

But Hortense was now no longer "helpless and lonely." The Duchess of St Leu was again "the Queen," the centre and the sun of the Imperial court, to which everybody bowed. The haughty ladies who had altogether forgotten her during the last year, now hastened to do her homage.

"Your Majesty was unfortunately always in the country when I called to pay my respects," said one of them, who wished to excuse her negligence.

The Queen only replied with a smiling "Yes, Madame."

One of the first acts of the Emperor was to order that the estates of all the men who had surrendered France to the enemy should be sequestrated. He said:

"Those who abandoned me I pardon; but I am inflexible toward any man who betrayed his country."

The first time the Emperor again saw Marshal Soult, who was Minister of War at the period when he landed at Cannes, and who had so maltreated him in his proclamation to the army, he said to him:

"Duke of Dalmatia, are you aware that you fired canister at me?"

"It is true, Sire; but it was a shot that could not hit you."

The Emperor appointed him Chief of the Staff, a place hitherto held by Berthier. Regarding the latter officer the Emperor remarked:

"Why did the Prince of Neufchâtel leave France? Why has he not presented himself at the Tuileries? I would have inflicted but one punishment upon him: he should have appeared for the first time before me in his grand uniform as Captain of the Gardes de Corps of Louis XVIII."

Hortense, again a great personage, was anxiously sought after. The authorities, by order of the Emperor, hastening to wait on the Imperial family, humbly asked her to accord them an audience. There was no end to the public festivities and demonstrations.

The most significant and imposing of all these solemnities was that celebrated on the first of June, the Champ de Mai, when the Emperor with his own hand presented his army with the new eagles which were in future to guide them in battle instead of the lilies of the Bourbons.

It was a grand and impressive sight to behold that sea of men, which ebbed and flowed, shouting their "Vive l'Empereur," as the proud and triumphant veteran soldiers of the Empire received their eagles at the hand of the man whom they idolized. These Imperial emblems, before they were given to the different regiments, received the blessing of the priests, who stood on a balustrade in front of the Emperor's throne. Thousands of richly attired ladies were seated behind the *fauteuil* of Napoleon, while Hortense and her two sons sat close beside him.

The air was fresh and balmy, and the sun looked smilingly down upon the glittering array. The guns proclaimed with their voice of thunder the victory of Imperialism, martial music sounded, and myriads of spectators raised triumphant shouts. During this exciting scene, Hortense on her seat behind the Emperor was quietly taking a sketch of the memorable solemnity, which, as a presentiment in her breast told her, would be the last of Imperial France.

She was perhaps the only one in all that crowd who was not to be deceived and blinded by this scene of universal triumph and delight.

Although the sky was serene she saw the black clouds which were pregnant with storms, and already heard the growling of the thunder that was to shatter the throne of the Emperor. She knew that the day would come, and was not far off, when all these thousands who were now bowing to him would again turn from him and deny him, as they had already

done once, and that on that day the triumph of the present hour would be considered a crime! She felt all this, but she did not tremble at her previsions.

The Emperor was in power again; he was the lord and father whom Josephine had left her, and she must and would be faithful and obedient to him as long as she lived.

As yet there was no immediate sign of his downfall. Fortune seemed still to smile on him, and in the drawing-room of the Queen, where the diplomatists and statesmen, the artists and officers, of the Empire were again assembled, joy and amusement reigned. Literature and music, the arts and sciences, in beauteous alliance, rendered it an abode of bliss, where the cup of triumph was emptied to the dregs.

Benjamin Constant, who had changed from a zealous Royalist into an Imperial Councillor of State, came to Hortense's salon and read his novel, "Adolphe," and Talleyrand seemed to have nothing else to do except to amuse the Queen and her court by witty anecdotes and new social games.

Labedoyère brought into fashion a number of elegant idyllic trifles, which became the material for amusement and coquetry among the court ladies, whom he taught the poetic language of flowers, making it the means of communication in the circle that assembled around him. He also invented the alphabet of precious stones, each one of which represented a certain letter, and in connection with its fellow-gems formed mottoes and devices that were mounted on bracelets, necklaces, and rings.

The things with which the court of the Tuileries occupied themselves during the Hundred Days were of an innocent description.

One evening General Bertrand came to tell the Queen that the Emperor proposed breakfasting with her next morning at Malmaison. As it was ten in the evening, the preparations had to be made in all haste; but the Queen's head-cook was equal to the occasion. Not so his mistress, however, who feared the effect of revisiting a spot she had not seen since her mother's death.

"I shall not be able to refrain from weeping," she said, "when I find myself at the place which my brother forced me to leave with a broken heart. The Emperor, who works all day, wishes a moment's distraction, and for him Malmaison only recalls pleasant recollections. I should be wretched if I added bitterness to his pleasure by the sight of my grief, and yet I know not if I shall have sufficient strength to overcome my feelings."

After a moment's reflection the Queen added: "There is only one way; have the horses put to at once, I will sleep at Malmaison; by arriving at night I shall be able to yield to my feelings without fear of troubling anybody, and I shall be all the better to-morrow."

The next day the Emperor arrived, and passed the breakfast-time in conversing with Denon about the pictures in the Louvre. Presently he rose:

"I should like to see the bed-room of the Empress

Josephine," he said in a voice that betrayed deep feeling.

The Queen rose in her turn:

"No, Hortense, remain, my daughter, I will go alone, for it would affect you too deeply."

Some time after he returned, and in spite of all his efforts to appear calm, it could easily be seen that a gentle and sad recollection had been aroused in his mind. His eyes were moist, and it seemed as if he desired to assume a serious and stern air, in order to conceal the weakness which he wished neither to feel nor to display.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

NAPOLEON'S LAST FAREWELL.

THE storm, the approach of which Queen Hortense had long dreaded, speedily gathered. All the potentates of Europe, who had once been the Emperor's allies, declared themselves against him. Not one amongst them was willing to recognize Napoleon, though they had once condescended to negotiate with him as a sovereign.

"No peace, negotiation, or reconciliation with this man henceforth," wrote Alexander to Pozzo di Borgo, "all Europe shares my opinion on this point. We wish nothing beyond the fall of this man. France may have what she likes, we will force no sovereign

upon her, and the war will be over as soon as this man is removed."

But in order to "remove this man" war became necessary.

The armies of the allied powers at once approached the French frontiers. War was declared against France, or rather against the Emperor Napoleon, and the unhappy country that was longing for peace, and had only consented to the return of the Bourbons in order to secure its blessings, was once more dragged into strife.

On the 12th of June the Emperor with his army left Paris to meet his enemies. Napoleon, who formerly had never failed to be cheerful and confident of success, seemed on this occasion to be gloomy, as if haunted by evil presentiments. He well knew that his own fate and that of France depended on this one army. This time there was no question of conquests; it was for national independence, for the protection of the French soil, that the war-trumpet was sounded.

Paris, which had seen eighty days of uninterrupted rejoicing, was seized with the spasm of expectation. Music, dancing, and shouting ceased. All listened as if they expected to hear the roar of the cannon on the distant battle-field.

But the days of victory had passed. The cannon *did* roar, a battle was fought, but it was a contest that led to destruction instead of victory.

At Waterloo the eagles, which on the 1st of June had been consecrated and distributed in the Champ

de Mai, fell into the dust. Without an army, and as a fugitive, the Emperor returned to Paris, to which the victorious allies were fast following him.

Upon the earliest intelligence of Napoleon's return, Hortense hastened to the Elysée, where the Emperor had taken up his quarters, to receive him.

She had been sad and downcast for some days past. A presentiment of evil had haunted her, and now that the misfortune had actually come, now that everybody despaired, she was composed, and ready to stand by the Emperor even to the last.

Napoleon was lost; Hortense knew it; but he stood at that moment more than ever in need of friends, and she remained faithful to him at a time when most of his relations and followers forsook him.

On the 22nd of June the Emperor sent in to the Chambers his abdication in favour of his son, the King of Rome, and on the following day the Prince was proclaimed Emperor of the French, under the name of Napoleon II.

But the new Emperor was only a boy of four years of age, and at the time not even in France. He was in the hands of his grandfather, the Emperor of Austria, whose armies were even now advancing as enemies towards the capital.

Napoleon, having thus lost his Imperial crown a second time, was again, and finally, compelled to leave Paris, to await the fate his enemies were preparing for him.

This time he did not go to Fontainebleau, but to

Malmaison, where Josephine had lived after her separation from him, and where death had overtaken her. The Palace had come into the possession of Hortense, and Napoleon, but yesterday the ruler over a vast empire, now possessing nothing he could call his own, requested her to receive him in it.

Hortense of course received him with open arms. When her friends, on hearing of it, hastened to express their regret that she should thus have identified her lot, and that of her sons, with the fate of the fallen hero, she answered:

"The very danger of the step has led me to take it. I consider it a sacred duty to stand by the Emperor to the very last. The more unfortunate he is, the happier shall I be at having an opportunity for proving to him my devotion and attachment."

One of the Queen's most intimate and devoted friends ventured at this critical moment to remind her of the infamous and disgraceful rumours that had once been set afloat concerning her relations to Napoleon, rumours which had not yet altogether died out. She besought her royal friend not to give calumny a new opportunity for attacking her by receiving the Emperor at Malmaison, but Hortense, too high-minded to be actuated by selfish motives, replied:

"I do not care for these calumnies, and will not allow them to prevent me from the discharge of my duty. The Emperor has always treated me as his

child, and I shall therefore never cease to be his dutiful and affectionate daughter. The highest aim I strive for is to be at peace with myself."

Hortense therefore went to join the Emperor at Malmaison, where the few who had remained faithful to him assembled for his protection, giving to his residence once more the transient appearance of greatness and splendour. Marshals and generals, princes and dukes, had congregated around him to administer to his comfort, and to protect his life against the rashness of fanaticism, or the hired dagger of the assassin.

But Napoleon's fate was already decided, and nothing could alter it. When intelligence reached him that the allies were approaching nearer and nearer, and that resistance was no longer offered them; when he saw that all was lost, that his crown and his throne had fallen to pieces, and that even the love which he thought he had kindled in the hearts of the French nation by his victories and conquests had disappeared—he resolved to flee. Whither he cared but little: his only object was to leave the country that had forsaken him.

The Emperor resolved to go to Rochefort, and thence return to the island of Elba. The provisional government that had been formed in Paris had sent a messenger to Malmaison to request him to depart immediately. This gentleman was also commissioned to accompany him, and not to leave him until his embarkation had taken place.

One of the most glaring instances of ingratitude

displayed at this period was shown by Marshal Davoust, minister of war and commander-in-chief of the army, one of the generals on whom the Emperor had lavished the most unbounded kindness, his revenues amounting to 1,800,000 francs a year. Napoleon sent his aide-de-camp, General de Flahault, to this man, to obtain for him a respite of twenty hours from the provisional government; but his reply was:

"Tell *your* Bonaparte that if he does not start at once I shall go and compel him."

General de Flahault felt so indignant at this reply that he broke his sword, and gave in his resignation to the marshal; adding as he turned his back on him, that he would consider himself dishonoured if he served under such a man any longer. It is to be hoped that the Emperor never learned the insult offered him by a lieutenant to whom he had ever been deeply attached.

Napoleon, who was willing to depart, was to start on the afternoon of the 30th of June. All that was left for him to do was to take leave of his friends and his family, which he did with a tearless eye, his features cold and immoveable, even to hardness.

It was only when Hortense entered the room, and for the last time he clasped her boys in his arms, that an expression of pain passed over his face, his lips trembled, and he turned away, perhaps to conceal a tear.

When after a short interval he again faced Hortense to bid her farewell, his countenance was as stern

and harsh as before, though the Queen knew well what a tempest of feeling there was in his breast.

Hortense now asked him to grant her a last favour.

A sarcastic smile moved for a moment the rigid features of the Emperor, as the thought passed through his mind that he was yet able to give something, that there was a favour left which it was in his power to grant! With a motion of his head he nodded consent.

Hortense gave him a large black bandage.

"Sire," she said, "wear this bandage round your body. Conceal it carefully, but in time of need open it."

On taking the bandage the Emperor was surprised at its great weight.

"What does it contain?" he asked, "I wish to know."

"Sire," Hortense replied, blushing, and with a faltering voice, "it is my large diamond necklace. I have taken it to pieces and sewed the stones up. Your Majesty may one day be so situated as to require some money. I hope you will not deprive me of the satisfaction of knowing that my last gift was accepted."

Although the Emperor's first thought was to refuse the costly gift, Hortense was so persevering in her entreaties that he at last consented to accept his step-daughter's present.

Then they exchanged a few hurried words of parting, and Hortense, in order to hide the tears that were rushing into her eyes, hastened to leave the apartment with her boys.

Napoleon rang the bell, and gave orders that no-

body should be admitted into his apartments, but at the very moment when the order was being given the door opened and a national guard entered.

"Talma!" the Emperor exclaimed in an almost cheerful tone, "you here?"

And he stretched out his hand to the celebrated tragedian.

"Yes, Talma, sire," the visitor replied, pressing the Emperor's hand to his lips. "I have come here in this disguise to bid your Majesty good-bye."

"It is a good-bye for ever, Talma!" replied Napoleon; "I shall never again admire you in your great characters. I am about to set out on a journey from which I shall never return. You will be an emperor for many an evening yet, but it is different with me! My part is played out, Talma."

"No, sire. You will never cease to be the Emperor!" Talma replied enthusiastically; "although you possess no crown and no purple."

"And no people," the Emperor added.

"Sire, you have a people, and will always have one. You sit on a throne that will never fall. It is the throne you have built yourself on the battle-field, and which will be remembered in the annals of history. He who reads your life, to whatever nation he may belong, will bow to the Emperor."

"I have no people, Talma! They have all forsaken me, they have all betrayed me."

"Sire, the day must come when they will regret it; and Alexander of Russia, too, will regret having

forsaken the great man he once called his brother."

It was Talma's generous wish to remind the Emperor in this hour of humiliation of his former victories, in order that this remembrance might give him strength. He continued:

"Does your Majesty recollect that evening at Erfurt, when the Emperor of Russia, in the presence of everybody, and to the admiration of the audience, made you such a striking declaration of friendship? Oh, you will have forgotten it, sire! For you it was an event of common occurrence, but I shall never forget it. It was in the theatre. We were playing 'Œdipus.' I looked up to the box in which you were sitting, between the King of Würtemberg and the Emperor of Russia. I had eyes for none but you, the second Alexander of Macedon, the second Cæsar, and raised my arms towards you, when, true to my character, I had to say: *L'amitié d'un grand homme est un bienfait des Dieux.* And as I spoke thus, Alexander rose and embraced you. I saw it, and tears prevented me from continuing to speak. The audience burst into enthusiastic applause; but it was not intended for me, it was in honour of the Emperor Alexander."

Whilst Talma was thus speaking with sparkling eye and glowing cheek, a gentle smile passed over the pallid features of the Emperor. The former had gained his object, having succeeded in consoling the humiliated Emperor by the recollection of his former greatness.

Napoleon thanked him with a kindly look, and stretched out his hand in a last farewell.

Talma was just about leaving the room, when the carriage destined to take away the Emperor drove up.

At this moment the door opened, and a tall, majestic-looking woman entered the room, whose noble and almost classical features were half hidden by grey curls.

It was Lætitia, the Emperor's mother, who had come once more to see her son. Talma, in breathless excitement, stood immovable, and congratulated himself upon being permitted to witness so interesting a scene.

The lady passed Talma without noticing him, for she saw nothing but her son, who stood in the middle of the room, fixing his gaze with an indescribable expression on his parent.

They stood opposite each other, the Emperor's countenance remaining unchanged and immovable, as if fate had converted him into a marble statue of himself.

For a while they stood in each other's presence without speaking, but two large tears rolled down Lætitia's cheek. Talma, who was standing in the back-ground, wept bitterly, but Napoleon showed no sign of emotion.

At length Lætitia raised both her hands, and stretching them out to the Emperor, said with a clear and sonorous voice :

" Farewell, my son ! "

Napoleon pressed her hands in his, and looking long and affectionately in her face, with a voice as firm as his mother's had been, he exclaimed:

"Farewell, my mother!"

After once more looking at each other, the Emperor let his mother's hand fall, and Lætitia turned to depart. At the same moment General Bertrand entered to announce that all was ready for leaving Malmaison.

We may be allowed here to interpolate a few words respecting Madame Lætitia, for the purpose of describing some traits which honour her character and her sex. After the defection of Murat, which did so much injury to the French army, and was the principal cause of their misfortune, Madame Mère broke off all relations with her daughter, the Queen of Naples. All attempts made by the latter to effect a reconciliation were in vain; but at last she found her way in, and presenting herself to Madame with the affection and tenderness of a daughter she asked her mother what she had done to merit such treatment. The reply she received was the following:

"What you have done, good Heavens! You betrayed your brother, your benefactor."

The Queen of Naples remarked, with some degree of justice, that her husband was alone master of his policy, that imperious circumstances and the interests of his kingdom necessitated his rupture with France, and that no one, much less her mother, could find anything culpable in her conduct.

"You betrayed your benefactor," Madame Mère

repeated, "you should have employed all your influence with your husband to turn him from his fatal resolution. Murat ought to have passed over your dead body before committing such a felonious act; the Emperor was no less his benefactor than yours: retire, Caroline."

And she turned her back on her. It was not till after the Emperor's death that Madame Lætitia became reconciled to her daughter.

In 1820, when a Bonapartist conspiracy was denounced to the Chambers of Paris; when Spain rose, through the courage of the illustrious and unfortunate Riego; when Naples revolted, and all Italy was covered with Carbonari,—the government of the Bourbons felt great alarm. Deceived by false information, it appealed to the Pope, the subject of its complaint being the behaviour of Madame Lætitia, who was then residing at Rome. She had, it was stated, her agents in Corsica, who were there to foment an insurrection in favour of Napoleon, the ramifications of which extended into the interior of France. The King was also said to be aware of the number of millions Madame Lætitia employed for this purpose. In the eyes of any man of common sense these stupid accusations refuted themselves, and it was more than absurd to suspect a woman of Madame Mère's age, close upon eighty, who never left her home or received a stranger, and was only visited at intervals by those of her family who resided in Rome, and daily by her brother, the Cardinal. It was really atrocious to impute such

designs to the Emperor's mother, and to point her out as the first mover in a conspiracy; but the Duke de Blacas represented the King of France at Rome, and the hatred he bore the members of the Imperial family permitted no doubt as to his being the author of so ridiculous a fable.

A very grave complaint was addressed on this subject by M. de Blacas to the Papal government. The Pope, when he heard it, ordered his Secretary of State to proceed to Madame Lætitia's and make an inquiry into the matter. His Eminence accordingly proceeded to Madame Mère's, and explained to her at length the motive of his visit. After expressing his regret at being compelled to undertake so painful a mission, he brought to her knowledge the charges France had made against her.

Madame Lætitia, who allowed him to speak without interruption, heard him to the end, and then replied with dignity:

"Monsieur le Cardinal, I have no millions, but be good enough to tell the Pope, in order that my remarks may be repeated to King Louis XVIII., that were I fortunate enough to possess the fortune so charitably attributed to me, I should not employ it in fomenting troubles in Corsica, or to secure my son partisans in France, for he has enough of them; but I should use it to equip a fleet with a special mission, that of proceeding to fetch the Emperor from St Helena, where the most infamous and dishonourable conduct keeps him prisoner."

Then, bowing to the Cardinal, she withdrew to her private apartments.

We will now return to the Emperor, who was hurrying to Rochefort, having with him in the carriage General Beckert, the commissary appointed by the provisional government to accompany him till he embarked. On his arrival at Rochefort the Emperor found there his brother Joseph, who was about to embark on board an American ship for the United States, which he succeeded in reaching.

A Danish captain, whose vessel was reputed to be an excellent sailer, and who happened to be lying in La Rochelle roads, offered to convey the Emperor to New York, answering for the success of the enterprise with his head: but he insisted on a special condition, that Napoleon should embark alone, and hide himself in a secret berth, which he refused to do.

There was only one way of saving the Emperor from the English cruisers, and the attachment his brother Joseph bore him was a guarantee that this infallible plan would not have been proposed in vain. All that was necessary was for Joseph to assume the grey coat and hat, and, surrounded by the Emperor's friends, allow himself to be captured by the English. Certainly the resemblance in the face was striking, and there was not so much difference in the height of the two brothers as to allow the ingenious stratagem to be detected. The English, once holding Joseph as prisoner, would have hurried him to

Portsmouth, and the Emperor could have proceeded to America with the greater facility, as the British squadron would have been withdrawn.

Mlle de Cochelet frequently conversed with the Queen on this subject, and they were quite agreed as to its feasibility.

"If the Emperor or his brother had hit on the idea," the Queen said, "it would have been a bright page in Joseph's history: and from my knowledge of him I do not think he would have allowed the opportunity for such an act of devotion to slip."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE BANISHMENT OF THE QUEEN.

As soon as the Emperor had finally departed, every one began asking himself, — What king shall we have? Assuredly it cannot be one of the Bourbons; after having been thus expelled, how could it be possible for them to return? Prince Eugène was the popular favourite, but all joined in the cry of "No more Bourbons!"

Fouché himself wrote to the foreign ministers that it was hopeless to dream of bringing back the Bourbons; that the Revolution of '89 could not be effaced, and attempting to go beyond it would be the way to bring it back. No stability could be hoped for save with the new dynasty, and the Regency was best

fitted for France, because it represented the principles of the Revolution, and gave the institutions time to be established on the wide basis which the wants of the country demanded.

On July 1st many officers of the army spent the evening with the Queen, having left their quarters without obtaining leave. General Excelmans and Colonels Lascour and Lawoestine did not conceal their despair at the departure of the Emperor, and made the Queen a proposition which could only have emanated from them while under the influence of that feeling.

"Come with us, Madame," they said to her; "withdraw to the heart of that army among whom you and yours count sincerely devoted friends: we shall be too happy to watch over you and your children, and escort you till you have reached a place of safety; each regiment in turn will act as your guard, and feel proud of the privilege."

The Queen was deeply affected by their offer, but did not hesitate to decline it.

"I am not in a position to form such a resolution," she said to them with her ordinary gentleness, "I must undergo my fate: I am no longer anything, I cannot produce the belief that I am rallying the troops round me, or change their destination in order to protect myself. Had I been sovereign of France, I would have done everything in the world for its defence. I gave the same advice to my sister the Empress Marie Louise in 1814. I would not have left the capital until it became utterly impossible to

save it; then and only then I would have retired among you: but it is not for me to mingle my destiny with such mighty interests as those of France, and I must resign myself to isolation, to persecutions, perhaps, which I have certainly not merited."

"But what do you intend to do, Madame?" General Excelmans asked.

"Quit Paris and France for ever—Europe, if it be necessary, so soon as I have my passports and the roads are free to enable me to travel in safety."

"Reflect carefully on this, Madame; you are alone, and your children so young. It is really alarming."

"I know it, General, but what is to be done? I will proceed to a country where I may be able to live in peace—to Switzerland, America, no matter where, provided that I am far from the agitations of the world, and sheltered from the events which are about to overthrow so many destinies."

Such were the lasts marks of devotion offered the Queen, which her good sense and resignation did not allow her to avail herself of, as she had no wish to associate any one with her in her misfortunes, or to prolong, for her private interests, a struggle already so alarming for the country.

The hope of defending Paris, which had so long been kept up, faded away. People had believed that Marshal Davoust, who had so frequently distinguished himself—in the last instance by the defence of Hamburg,—would give a second display of his skill in Paris, but he had grown old and demanded rest. This was the reason he had not commanded a *corps*

d'armée during the last short campaign. Napoleon had employed his talent in the Ministry of War. Davoust, moreover, was uncomfortable in his private life, for his wife was suffering greatly. These circumstances seemed to have exercised an influence over him; and though he was Commander-in-chief of the army under the walls of Paris, he was subordinate to the provisional government.

The Queen, repeatedly insulted by the hired agents of the Faubourg St Germain, resolved to retire to a place of safety. An incident, however, delayed her departure. The inhabitants of St Leu having resisted the allied troops, one of the gamekeepers was taken by the Prussians and sentenced to be shot. The Queen, in order to save this man, applied to Prince William of Prussia, who interceded on his behalf, and obtained his pardon.

On July 4th the Convention sending the French army beyond the Loire was signed, and the capital surrendered without defence to the allies. The provisional government resigned *en masse*, alleging that the allies had not fulfilled their promise to allow the French nation to select their own monarch. When the Queen heard this she said to Mademoiselle de Cochelet,—

"Good Heaven! is it possible that an assembly of sensible men, whose intentions are good, should have deceived themselves so grossly as to the position of France? Make speeches! Send envoys to an enemy who does not receive them! Imagine that incredible forces have marched upon France only to see what the

nation decided on, adopted—it is incredible! The Emperor was quite right when he said, a few days ago, at Malmaison, with an undefinable expression of sorrow, 'We have fallen back into the Lower Empire, and people amuse themselves with coolly discoursing when the enemy is at the gates.'"

On July 3rd Louis XVIII. made his triumphal entry into Paris. It was the more brilliant because the mob was composed of Dukes, Marquises, and Counts, quality being substituted for quantity. The exultation was delirious, the cries and gestures convulsive, so extravagant was the joy of the dominant party. The handsome equipages of elegant ladies encumbered the passage of the sovereign surnamed *le Désiré*. As they passed incessantly, their inmates waved their white handkerchiefs, people shook hands from the carriage windows, and to set the seal on the whole, a great lady, whose equipage was standing on the Boulevard de Gand, took her coachman round the neck and embraced him convulsively.

For the second time the Bourbons entered Paris with the aid of foreign bayonets; Louis XVIII. was once more King of France. But this time he did not come with mild and conciliatory intentions, but to punish. Mercy was not to be found in his train.

The old generals and marshals of the Empire, who had been unable to resist the call of their former master, were now deprived of their rank, exiled or shot. Both Ney and Labedoyère had to pay with their lives for their generous attachment to the Emperor, and all who had been connected with the

Napoleon family were treated with the utmost harshness and severity.

The calumnies which in 1814 had been sown against Hortense, were now to bring forth melancholy fruit. They resembled the dragon's teeth that sprung up into hostile warriors, with this difference, that on the present occasion they attacked a defenceless woman.

Although Louis XVIII. had returned to the throne of his fathers, he had not yet forgotten what they had told him on his road to Holland, that it was all the doing of the Duchess of St Leu, and that her intrigues alone had brought back the Emperor.

Now that Louis was King once more he remembered this, and wishing to have his revenge, he asked it as a favour of the Emperor Alexander that he would not again visit the Duchess de St Leu.

The Emperor, who was startled at the strange rumours that were in circulation about Hortense, had already begun to be under the mysterious influence of Madame de Krüdener, who turned him from the things of the world; he did therefore as the Bourbons wished, and gave the Queen up.

This was the signal for the Royalists to throw off all restraint in the gratification of their jealousy and hatred of Hortense. Now at full liberty to deride and calumniate her in the meanest manner, they eagerly seized the opportunity for doing so, meaning to have their revenge for having been compelled to bow to her as a Queen. Their dastardly attacks were carried to an incredible height. Was not the woman

whom they insulted the step-daughter of Napoleon? Their very cowardice became a merit in the eyes of the royal family, in whose eyes to slander and persecute the Napoleon family was to serve and flatter the Bourbons.

The Royalists never abandoned their victim for a single moment. Hortense was a hateful memento of the Empire, and for that reason she must be removed, like the statue on the Place Vendôme.

Whilst the poor Queen was sitting lonely and sad in the remotest part of her hôtel, the rumour was spread by the Royalists that she was again plotting, and that in the dusk of evening she would leave her house to harangue the people and excite them to rebellion. It was a positive fact, they said, that she advised them, if not to demand back the Emperor, at least to insist upon the little King of Rome ascending the throne instead of a Bourbon.

When Mademoiselle de Cochelet, the Queen's faithful companion and friend, acquainted her mistress with the existence of these rumours, she took but little notice of them.

"Why, Madame," exclaimed Mademoiselle de Cochelet, "you listen to it as quietly as if I were relating the history of the last century."

"It is indeed the same to me," Hortense replied quietly; "all is lost for us, and I look upon the worst that can now happen to me with the indifference of a spectator. I consider it perfectly natural that people should be anxious to defame me, for I

bear a name at whose sound the world has trembled, and which will continue to be a great one, whatever they may do to us. But I must take measures to protect myself and children against this hatred. I mean to leave France and retire to Switzerland, where on the banks of the Lake of Geneva I possess a small estate."

But the Queen was not even allowed to make the necessary preparations for her voyage. The Royalists had succeeded in thoroughly poisoning the King's mind against Hortense, and as the government was afraid of the helpless woman and her two little boys, they hastened to get rid of them as soon as possible.

Early on the 17th of July an aide-de-camp of the Prussian General, Müffling, who was then the military commandant of Paris, called at the house of the Duchess de St Leu, and told her steward that within two hours she must leave the capital. It was not without difficulty Monsieur Deveaux obtained permission for his mistress to remain six hours. Hortense was obliged to submit to the order, and had no alternative but to leave Paris without having been able even to arrange her affairs or to make the necessary preparations. Her only movable fortune consisted of her precious stones, and these, of course, she intended to take with her. But in an official warning she was told that a band of fanatic Royalists, who had heard of her departure, had left Paris to waylay her, in order "to strip her of those millions she was trying to carry off."

The Duchess was advised not to attempt, under such circumstances, to take much money or other valuables with her, but only to provide herself with what was absolutely necessary.

At the same time General Müffling offered her an escort of Prussian troops, which, however, was refused. Hortense only asked that an Austrian officer might be allowed to accompany her, to protect her on her journey. Her request was granted, and Count Voyna, the aide-de-camp of Prince Schwarzenberg, was intrusted with this delicate mission.

They set out on their journey on the evening of the 17th of July, 1815, Hortense's faithful companion, Mademoiselle de Cochelet, remaining in Paris to settle her mistress's affairs and secure her diamonds. Accompanied only by her equerry, Monsieur de Marmold, Count Voyna, her children, a maid, and a footman, the Queen left Paris to proceed into exile.

Hortense's journey through her beloved France, to which she had now ceased to belong, was a sad and melancholy one. The country that had once adored the Emperor and his family seemed now animated by an intense hatred against them.

All Bonapartists remained during these days of excitement in their hiding-places, or at least carefully concealed their true political opinions behind the mask of Bourbonism. Thus it happened that only Royalists were to be met with, and they fancied they could not evince their loyalty in any better

manner than by assaulting a poor, defenceless woman, greeting her with derision, insults, and maledictions, simply because she bore the name that was once idolized by France, although the legitimists had never ceased to hate it.

More than once was her Austrian protector, Count Voyna, compelled to defend her and her children against the furious attacks of Royalist bands, her own countrymen. At Dijon, he was even forced to call out the Austrian garrison, in order to protect her against a fanatic mob, led and excited by royal guards and noble ladies ornamented with white lilies.

Broken in spirit by what she had been obliged to see and experience, downcast and despairing, Hortense at last arrived in Geneva. But the thought that she would at length find here solitude and peace consoled her; and she retired at once to her small estate on the banks of the lake, which bears the name of Pregny.

Hortense was not allowed, however, to enjoy her place of refuge long. The French ambassador to Switzerland, who was residing in Geneva, informed the municipal authorities that his government would not suffer the Queen to settle so near the French frontier, and demanded her immediate departure. The Genevese rulers, therefore, compelled to obey, ordered Hortense at once to quit the town.

When Count Voyna, on bringing the Duchess this bad piece of news, asked her where she intended to go now, she exclaimed despairingly:

"I do not know where to go! Throw me into the lake, then we shall all be at rest!"

But soon recovering her usual proud self-possession, she submitted patiently to this new exile, which deprived her of her last possession, the charming little estate of Pregny, her *rêve de bonheur*.

In Aix she was at last allowed to live in peace for a few weeks. It was in this town she had once enjoyed proud triumphs, but now she was barely suffered to exist with her children and a few servants within its walls.

At Aix she was to receive the severest blow Fate had yet dealt her.

So far back as 1814, and shortly before the Emperor's return, she had lost the law-suit against her husband, and been condemned to give up to him her eldest son, Napoleon Louis. Now that the Emperor's displeasure was no longer to be feared, Louis demanded that this verdict should be carried out, and sent a Baron de Zuyten to fetch the boy away and remove him to Florence, where his father was then living.

It was no longer in the power of the unhappy mother to resist the claims of her husband. She was obliged to submit, and allow the boy to be taken to a father who was a stranger to him, and for whom therefore his heart could not feel the slightest affection.

The scene of parting between mother and son was a heart-rending one, and little Louis, who had never been separated from his brother for a moment, wept

bitterly, and throwing his arms round his neck, besought him not to go away.

But the separation had become imperative. Hortense, herself, tore the two boys from each other, and clasped little Louis Napoleon to her bosom, whilst Napoleon, bathed in tears, followed his tutor to the carriage. When Hortense heard it roll away she fainted and sank to the ground. A long and serious illness was the consequence of this separation.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE AUTHOR OF THE HOLY ALLIANCE.

We have seen that Mademoiselle de Cochelet remained in Paris after the Queen's departure, to watch over her mistress's private affairs, and to save what she could out of the wreck. While thus engaged she heard of the arrival in Paris of Madame de Krüdener, and immediately hurried to assure herself of the help of this friend at Court.

Madame de Krüdener was residing at Altorf when the war broke out, and the hostile armies passed through that town in succession; she was still there when the Russian troops arrived and indulged in the most revolting excesses. A poor family, in which Madame de Krüdener took an interest, were most shamefully beaten and maltreated, and in her grief she resolved to apply to Alexander directly. Pro-

ceeding to his head-quarters, she asked him to stop the excesses of his troops, predicting that if he did not maintain discipline and order in his army God would not bless his enterprise.

Without any introduction or letter of recommendation this remarkable woman presented herself to the Russian Emperor, and was greatly surprised at being received immediately on mentioning her name. The Emperor, whom she found alone, showed her the greatest attention.

"It is the hand of God that brings you here, Madame," he said, "at a moment when I ardently desired your presence, and was asking Heaven to enlighten me with reference to its designs about me."

He then told her that his wife, whom she had seen the previous year at Baden Baden, had spoken to him a good deal about her; that he was aware of all that Madame de Krüdener had said to the Empress, which had struck him, but he was more surprised at seeing the accomplishment of all the events she had predicted; that he incessantly thought about it, and that at the very moment when he was interrupted by the announcement of her visit, he was praying for enlightenment and for her arrival.

As this extraordinary coincidence could only appear to the Emperor as a miracle, he could entertain no doubt of Madame de Krüdener's celestial mission, and the counsels she gave him as to the duties of his position, and the necessity of conciliation, protection, and peace so affected him, that from that moment he

would not permit her to leave him again, and never let a day pass without seeing her.

Madame de Krüdener proceeded to Paris with the staff, and arrived there on the same day as Alexander; she took up her quarters in a house not far from the Elysée Bourbon, where the Emperor resided. Every evening he skirted the gardens of the Faubourg St Honoré, and, followed by only one Cossack, entered the residence of Madame de Krüdener by a back gate, where he prayed with her, reviving his confidence and faith by the lady's exhortations. They thus passed several hours together, during which no one was admitted to Madame de Krüdener, and the Emperor's household supposed him to be at work in his cabinet.

Madame de Krüdener spoke to Mademoiselle de Cochelet about the Queen with all the interest and affection she felt for her, and again repeated that the Emperor Alexander could alone efficaciously protect her.

"I know," she said, "that he is not as well disposed towards the Queen as he formerly was; he believes that she has interfered in politics, and is angry with her on that account; but this cloud will pass over, for he is too good, too noble, too generous,—his is a soul worthy of Heaven. I must insist on your seeing the Emperor Alexander, and it will be easy for you to have an explanation with him. Come to me at the time when he pays me his usual visit, and I guarantee to procure you a kind reception."

At first Mademoiselle de Cochelet declined this offer, through fear of compromising the Queen, but

by the inducement of the Duke de Vicenza, who pointed out how much Hortense required a protector, she consented to see the Emperor.

A great change had taken place in a year; formerly Alexander would call in Mademoiselle de Cochelet, and over a dish of tea talk about the future of the Queen of Holland. Now, he was stern and conscious of his dignity. Madame de Krüdener was the first to break the embarrassing silence, by saying she believed that he would not be sorry to see an old acquaintance, against whom he had been unfairly prejudiced.

Mademoiselle de Cochelet then said that if the Emperor's unfavourable opinions had been confined to herself, she would not have troubled his Majesty by any attempt to dissipate them, but as they extended to the Queen, she thought it her duty to use her utmost endeavour to induce him to do her mistress the justice she deserved.

"I still feel my old friendship for Queen Hortense," he replied, "but I frankly confess that I do not like ladies to interfere in politics, and on that head the Queen has been altogether different from what I supposed."

"But, sire, what has she done that does not agree with the qualities and character your Majesty was pleased to recognize in her? for there are positions in which ladies are compelled to take part in political events."

"Assuredly: but, after receiving, from the kindness of the King of France, permission to remain at

Paris, the Queen ought not to have mingled so actively as she did in politics."

"Say, from *your* kindness, sire, for you cannot have forgotten that the Queen would receive nothing from the Bourbons, and that she only yielded to your wishes in accepting what you offered her."

"No matter from whom she accepted favour, she ought not to have remained in Paris when the Emperor Napoleon returned."

"I know not what she ought to have done from a political point of view, but as daughter and sister of the Emperor, her duty ever was superior to her interests, and if she fulfilled it actively it was not in the moment of triumph, but when misfortune arrived, by proceeding to Malmaison to share the dangers of a man to whom she owed everything, watching over his safety, and softening the humiliation of the last days of the crisis."

"That character was fully worthy of Queen Hortense," the Emperor said, giving up the dry tone he had hitherto assumed, "and if I could be useful to her in any matter, I would be so willingly."

Unhappily for the Queen, her companion was constrained to exercise reserve, and she merely replied:

"It will surely be very agreeable, sire, to the Queen to hear of the interest your Majesty still takes in her, but as for receiving a service from any one, or having recourse to the protection of any man, no matter who he may be, she has clearly proved that this was not her intention by leaving Paris as she has done. She had scarcely time to procure necessaries,

and was unable to take her jewels with her, which now constitute her sole fortune, and which she would not expose to the risks of travelling."

"I am vexed that under the circumstances she did not think of applying to me, and if you wish to send her her jewels, I will have them delivered by a sure hand."

"I thank your Majesty, but I have deposited the precious objects belonging to the Queen in safety. For the moment she does not require them; a set of rubies and diamonds which she has commissioned me to dispose of will supply her with the means of existence for some time to come."

The Emperor still pressed Mademoiselle de Cochelet, but she did not dare to accept any favour in her mistress's name. The set of rubies and diamonds was accordingly sold at one-fourth its value, as were most of the articles belonging to the Queen. But as the person with whom Mademoiselle de Cochelet deposited the proceeds became bankrupt, the Emperor Alexander had an opportunity for obliging Hortense and Eugène soon after. Several fine pictures, left at Malmaison, and given by Napoleon to Josephine, were among the results of the Emperor's conquests. To prevent the Elector of Hesse Cassel, who had demanded them, getting hold of them, Alexander had them conveyed to his palace, and paid their value to the brother and sister.

Madame de Krüdener, strange to say, did not exert her undoubted influence to save any victims from the reaction that set in. She could have done

so easily, but doubtless attaching no value to their perishable bodies, she contented herself with praying for their souls.

To her too was owing the idea of the Holy Alliance. One evening, when Mademoiselle de Cochelet visited her, she told her friend that she had been exhorting the Emperor Alexander to raise the banner of Christ.

"The reign of the Saviour will come, sire," she said to him; "glory and happiness for those who fought for Him! Maledictions and woe on those who fought against Him! Form a Holy Alliance of all those who belong to the true faith, and let them take an oath to combat the innovators who wish to overthrow religion, and you will triumph eternally with it."

The Emperor Alexander may have listened to this advice, but it is quite certain that, when he reviewed his army in Champagne, he insisted on Madame de Krüdener's accompanying him, and inspecting his battalions. As no man in the world more feared ridicule than the Emperor of Russia, to brave it as he did by thus displaying his relations with Madame de Krüdener needed a firm conviction on his part; for age, the face of the inspired prophetess, and her grey hair, allowed no misinterpretation of the motives that actuated him.

This extraordinary woman came to a bad end: she committed the fatal mistake of rendering herself ridiculous, and became an object of suspicion to the police. She eventually died in the Crimea in 1824,

her last companion in exile being the Countess of Lamothe, who had been publicly whipped and branded on the Place de Grève at Paris, as the instigator of the notorious robbery of Marie Antoinette's diamond necklace.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE CHILDHOOD OF LOUIS NAPOLEON.

On reaching Aix, the Queen hired the first house vacant; it was badly situated, gloomy, and ugly; the only advantage it offered being a rather large court-yard, where the children could play at their ease. Two or three boys, of about their own age, joined them, belonging to persons who lived in the neighbourhood. They played at soldiers, and the younger Prince, proud of being at their head and beating the drum, which formed part of Louis's playthings, drummed away furiously, making the greatest noise possible, which, however, could not be heard a very great distance. Prince Napoleon, as the elder and more intelligent, commanded the troop, and walked at its head with his little sabre. He dressed the line, and raised his voice to its full pitch as he gave the word of command. Prince Louis, armed with a stick like the rest, watched every movement of his brother, who was his model and his idol.

Seated at the window, the Queen and Mademoiselle de Cochelet watched their innocent amusements, little suspecting that they would presently give rise to Police reports—for who could have guessed such aberrations of the human mind?

Even at Aix the unfortunate Queen was not long to enjoy a peaceful retirement. The Bourbons, who continued to persecute her, being ever afraid of the proud name she bore, although its great representative was banished to a distant isle, considered it dangerous that the Emperor's step-daughter and her son Louis Napoleon (whose very name reminded them of the past) should remain so near to the French frontier. They therefore lodged a protest with the Government of Savoy against her residence in that country, and she was compelled once more to move and wander through the world in search of a home.

She first went to Baden, the Grand-Duchess of which, Stephanie, was a near relation of hers, and from her husband she might therefore well expect a friendly reception.

But the Grand-Duke, who had not sufficient courage to defy the cowardly apprehensions of France, did not justify the hopes of his cousin. It was only after persevering entreaties on the part of his wife, that he at last permitted Hortense to settle in the furthest corner of his country, in Constance, on the banks of the Lake; but the Duchess de St Leu had to pledge herself that neither she nor her son would ever come

to Karlsruhe, and the Grand-Duchess Stephanie was obliged to promise that she would never go to see her cousin in Constance.

Hortense submitted to these conditions. She was glad to have found at last a place where she might rest her weary head. She was tired of wandering about, and longed to cicatrize the wounds of her bleeding heart in the silence and sacred peace of a lovely and sweet locality. At Constance Hortense spent a few happy years, wishing for nothing and asking for nothing, save a little peace and solitude; her consolation consisted in her son, who reconciled her to all her misfortunes, and whom she intended bringing up to be a strong-minded, energetic man. How she succeeded the world now knows to its amazement.

She bestowed the greatest possible care on the education of the young prince. She engaged a distinguished man, Professor Lebas of Paris, to be his tutor, she herself instructing him in drawing, music, and dancing. She would read and sing with him, and becoming a child again, occupy for the lonely, isolated boy the place of the companion he had lost.

When in the long winter evenings she reclined on her couch near the fireside, the boy on a foot-stool at her feet, she would tell him of his great uncle and his achievements, of France, their native country, which at present was closed against them, but to return to which must always be their dearest wish, their most energetic endeavour.

The boy's heart would swell with enthusiasm

when he heard of the great battles his uncle had won in Italy and Egypt, on the banks of the Rhine, and on those of the Danube. With his dark, thoughtful eyes, he would listen to her in breathless suspense, his slender frame trembling with excitement and emotion when he heard of the love the Emperor had borne to France, and of the grand and noble actions he had accomplished for her glory and honour.

One day when the boy was thus sitting at his mother's feet, pale and breathless with excitement, listening to her stories of the past, Hortense pointed to that beautiful picture, painted by David, representing Napoleon at the top of the Alps, the idea of which originated with the Emperor himself.

"Paint me quietly sitting on a fiery horse," Napoleon said to David, and David had taken the advice. He represented the Emperor on his charger, rearing proudly on the summit of a rock that bears the inscriptions "Hannibal" and "Cæsar." The expression of Napoleon's face is calm, but his eyes have an unfathomable lustre. The breeze toys with his hair, and he is unmindful of his rearing steed, whose reins he tightly grasps.

There was a copy of this celebrated painting in the *salon* of the Duchess. She was pointing to it, whilst engaged in relating the Emperor's passage over the Alps, a feat which none but Hannibal and Cæsar had accomplished before, and which no other perhaps would attempt after him. The boy's face was radiant with enthusiasm as he listened with

intense excitement to his mother's words. He rose, and proudly standing erect, exclaimed:

"Mother, I too shall cross the Alps one day, like the Emperor."

And whilst he thus spake, his cheek burned, his lips trembled, and his heart beat audibly.

Hortense felt alarmed. Turning to her companion, Mademoiselle de Cochelet, she begged her, in a whisper, to divert the boy's thoughts by telling him some amusing story. The lady was thinking what story she should choose, when her eye fell on a tea-cup standing on the mantel-piece. She rose, took the cup, and returned with it to little Louis Napoleon.

"Mamma has explained to you a serious picture, Louis," Mademoiselle de Cochelet began; "now I will show you an amusing one. Look here, is not this very pretty?"

The little prince gave a careless, hasty look at the cup, and nodded his head. Mademoiselle laughed.

"Look here, Louis, this picture is exactly the opposite to that of the Emperor Napoleon riding across the Alps, and meeting the great spirits of Hannibal and Cæsar. It represents a little Napoleon, who, instead of ascending the Alps, is descending from his bed, and meets a black ghost in the shape of a little chimney-sweep. This is the story of the little Napoleon. The great Napoleon meets Hannibal, and the small one meets a chimney-sweep."

"Am I the little Napoleon?" the boy inquired.

"Yes, Louis, you are," was the reply, "and now I will tell you the story of the cup. One day, when we were still living in Paris, and your uncle was Emperor of France, you met in your room a poor little chimney-sweep, who in his black dress had just crept out of the chimney. You began crying, for you were frightened, and wished to run away, but I held you fast, and told you that the parents of these little boys were so poor as to be unable to keep their children at home, and were compelled to send them to Paris, where at the risk of their lives they had to gain a livelihood by creeping into dirty chimneys to clean them. My description affected you, and you promised not to be any more afraid of little chimney-sweeps.

"Some time after you were one morning awakened by a strange noise. Your brother lay sleeping by your side, and the nurse had gone out of the room. The noise originated with a chimney-sweep who had just descended, and then stood in the middle of the room. On seeing him you remembered what I had told you, and got out of bed to hasten to the chair on which your clothes were lying. You took from the pocket of your coat the purse which contained the money you used to take with you in your walks in order to give alms, and emptied its contents into the sooty hand of the chimney-sweep; after this you wished to return to your bed, but unfortunately it proved too high for you. On seeing this, the little chimney-sweep took up the little prince in his arms to lift him into bed. At this moment the nurse

returned, and your brother, whom the noise had awakened, began crying terribly at seeing little Louis in the black arms of the chimney-sweep.

"This is the story of little Napoleon and the chimney-sweep. Your grandmamma, the Empress Josephine, was so amused at it, that your mamma, wishing agreeably to surprise the Empress, had this scene painted on a tea-cup which was presented to grandmamma. And would you believe it, Louis, this cup was the means of saving your cousin, the little King of Rome, who is now living in Vienna, a punishment!"

"O tell me that story, Louise dear," the prince said with a smile.

"Well, then, listen. Your mother had requested me to take this cup to Malmaison, where the Empress resided. Before going there I had to inquire after the health of the King of Rome, whom Josephine loved as if he had been her own child, but whom she had never yet seen. So I went to the Tuileries to see the little King and his governess, Madame de Montesquieu, who was an intimate friend of mine. When I entered the room I saw the little King standing in a corner, with his face turned to the wall. He looked very downcast, and a glance at Madame de Montesquieu told me that he was undergoing some punishment.

"After conversing for some time with Madame de Montesquieu, and taking no notice of the child, I approached him. His face, I could see, was bathed in

tears, although he hid it against a chair that was near him.

"'Sire,' said Madame de Montesquieu, to him, 'will you not shake hands with Mademoiselle de Cochelet? She has come here for the sole purpose of seeing you.'

"'I suppose your Majesty does not recognize me?' I added, endeavouring to take his little hand.

"He withdrew it violently, and said in a voice almost choked with sobs,—

"'She will not allow me to see papa's soldiers.'

"Madame de Montesquieu now told me that the Prince delighted in seeing the guards arrive in the palace-yard, but that in consequence of his being naughty she had denied him this pleasure to-day. When he heard the drums and fifes he got quite unmanageable, so that she was compelled to have recourse to severe measures. This was the reason he was standing in the corner. I asked forgiveness for the little King, and showed him the cup with your portrait, explaining at the same time the scene it represented. The King of Rome laughed, and Madame de Montesquieu let him off his punishment, because she said his cousin, Louis Napoleon, had been so good and charitable. That is my story, Louis; do you like it?"

"I like it very much indeed," the boy replied, "but I am vexed that the governess would not let my cousin see his father's soldiers. How handsome the soldiers of the Emperor must have been! Mamma, I

wish I was an Emperor too, and could have a great many soldiers."

Hortense, with a sad smile, put her hand on the boy's head and answered:

"My son, it is no enviable lot to wear a crown. It is but too often affixed to our brow with thorns."

From this day little Napoleon was often seen gazing in deep thoughtfulness on the portrait of his great uncle. When he left it, he would run into the village, call together the boys of the neighbourhood, and go with them to the large garden that surrounded the Duchess's house, to play at "Emperor and soldiers." One day, whilst in the heat of play, he forgot his mother's order that he was not to leave the precincts of the garden, and marched off with his troops. When his absence was noticed an old servant was despatched to look after the boy, and the Duchess herself went with her ladies in search of him in spite of the rigour of the season, and the mud that covered the roads.

All at once they saw Louis barefooted, and without a coat, running towards them through a muddy field. Looking rather surprised, and seeming confused by the sudden meeting, he at once confessed that while he had been playing in the garden a family passed by so poor and miserable that he could not help pitying them. Being without money, he had pulled off his shoes and given them to one of the children, while his coat had become the property of another.

The Duchess, not possessing the courage to scold

her son, stooped to kiss him. When her ladies began praising the boy for the generosity of his action, she gave them a hint to be silent, and said that he had done nothing but what was natural and right.

To give to others, and to make them happy, was one of the characteristic qualities of little Napoleon. One day Hortense presented him with three very handsome studs, and the Prince gave them the very same day to a friend of his, by whom they had been greatly admired.

When Hortense blamed her son for so doing, and threatened not to make him any more presents, Louis replied:

"But, mamma, do I not enjoy my presents doubly in giving them away? I have first the pleasure of receiving them from you, and then that of pleasing others."

Although this is not the right place for it, still, as we think that no anecdote relating to the youth of Louis Napoleon ought to be passed over, we insert here from Mademoiselle de Cochelet's valuable Memoirs the account of an affair that happened some years previously.

One day Louis Napoleon, then six years of age, had a violent toothache.

"Send for the dentist," he said to Mademoiselle de Cochelet, "and let him pull out this double tooth which causes me such pain, but you must not tell mamma, as it would make her frightened."

"How can you hide it from your mother? Her sit-

ting-room is next to your bed-room, she will hear you cry, and will be much more alarmed than if she knew what the matter really was."

"I will not cry, I promise you. Am I not a man, and must have courage?"

Mademoiselle Cochelet promised secrecy, which she did not keep; for the Queen would have been excessively angry had anything been concealed from her that affected her children. Still she pretended to know nothing, in order to please her son.

Bourquet the dentist was summoned, and pulled out the double tooth, the child not uttering a single cry. He ran triumphantly to show it to his mother, who was anxiously waiting, and affected surprise, though really more moved than he. No one was ever more courageous than the Queen in supporting the miseries of life with angelic patience, but if her children were affected she was no longer the same woman; she troubled herself even about trifles, and was often unreasonable.

Two days after the extraction of the tooth the young Prince had a hemorrhage, and there was no chance of concealing it from his mother, who supposed both her children asleep, and on seeing the attendants enter the room, fancied the danger greater than it really was. It was, however, a painful sight to see the poor pale lad, half fainting, and losing blood from the place whence the tooth had been extracted. In matters of danger for her children the Queen never said a word; she coolly allowed all the remedies proposed to be tried, but it could be easily perceived

what terror she suffered, through her pallor, and the rigidity of her features. After numerous essays, each more useless than the other, the effusion of blood was stopped by laying *amadou* on the jaw. The poor boy, utterly exhausted, fell asleep in his mother's arms. When he was laid in his bed, the Queen withdrew to her couch, but could not sleep. The next day she said to her attendants:

"I am aware of my weakness, and I was angry with myself about this anxiety, which I thought unreasonable, and, not wishing to yield to it, I tried to think of anything else, in order to fall asleep; but it was in vain—my son's face rose before me pale and bleeding. In a moment my agony became so vivid that I had the notion that it might be a presentiment. I was at first ashamed of yielding to the idea, and then I said to myself, What matter if the idea be a foolish one, I shall pass the night in anxiety; hence I had better re-assure myself by watching my son's peaceful slumbers."

She rose without waking her attendants, took her lamp in her hand, and gently entered her son's room, where all was perfectly silent and calm. The nurse was fast asleep, as was the boy. She walked up cautiously, not wishing to arouse the wearied nurse, and saw her boy, just as her fears had represented him to her, pallid and bleeding.

She raised Louis Napoleon in her arms, but his limbs hung down flaccidly: he did not wake, and the blood still streamed from his lips. By a mechanical movement she placed her finger on the wound,

and though it refused to close, she found that a powerful pressure of the finger arrested the flow of blood.

The poor mother could scarce breathe, but she had been successful, and thanked God for having inspired her with the idea of coming to her son. As for him, weakened and wearied, he still slept on; but she saw by his breathing that he was alive. She spent the night thus. Ever at the same spot, not feeling the weariness of her position, without calling up her servants or stirring; and at daybreak the accident that might have been so fatal, was entirely checked.

Happy mother! but still happier son, in having had so devoted a parent. We shall never know what Hortense was for Louis Napoleon; but such anecdotes as these deserve to be treasured, as displaying an amount of maternal affection such as few princes can boast of.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE REVOLUTION OF 1830.

FATE seemed to be tired at last of persecuting the Duchess de St Leu. It granted her at least a few peaceful and comparatively happy years, during which she could rest after a stormy past, occupying

and consoling herself with the pursuits of art and science.

The Swiss canton of Thurgau had had the courage to brave the displeasure of almost all the European powers. When the Grand-Duke of Baden, pressed by France and Germany simultaneously, banished Hortense from his country, it offered her an asylum within its boundaries.

She gratefully accepted the generous offer of the canton, and purchased a small estate on the Swiss side of the Lake of Constance, charmingly situated on the summit of a mountain that afforded a beautiful view over the picturesque neighbourhood, to which the lofty mountains of Switzerland, with their shining glaciers, added an aspect of grandeur. The estate of Arenenberg, as it was called, was a charming little possession, and Hortense, resolving finally to settle there, had all her furniture brought from Paris.

The house she owned in the capital she sold, and many a scene of by-gone days rose up before her mental eye when she looked at the different articles of furniture which reached her from Paris—the chairs and sofas, the carpets and pictures, the mirrors, that had once adorned the *salons* in which she had been accustomed to receive emperors and kings. They seemed to her like friends, and she therefore wished to enjoy their company in the solitude of her Swiss villa.

Hortense possessed remarkably good taste. Know-

ing how to arrange everything so as to produce an appearance of symmetry and elegance, her house was exceedingly comfortable and pleasing, and she took a great delight in continually improving it.

When the furnishing of her new home was completed, she went with her son by her side through all the rooms of the villa. As in passing along she beheld the mementoes of her past greatness, a feeling of utter wretchedness and solitude overcame her, her memory recalling the smiling faces that had once been reflected by these mirrors, and the friends who had sat in these *fauteuils.*

Hortense wept bitterly.

And yet there was a certain consolation in being surrounded by the furniture of olden days, every article of which was as a friend reminding her with mute eloquence of a glorious past. Arenenberg was a shrine of remembrance; every chair, every table had its history, a history that was closely connected with Napoleon, with Josephine, and with the proud days of the Empire.

At Arenenberg the ex-Queen therefore at last found a new home. She lived there during the greater part of the year, but when winter came with its snow and storms, during which her slightly-built villa became too cold, she would go and spend a few months in Rome, whilst her son was attending the artillery-school at Thun.

Thus time passed on. Hortense's life was comparatively peaceful, although now and then interrupted by painful events.

In the year 1821 the Emperor died on St Helena. In 1824 she lost her only brother, Eugène, who, after the fall of Napoleon, was known as the Duke of Leuchtenberg.

Hortense had now no one left to love but her two sons, who were growing up into strong and energetic manhood, and of whom she was justly proud.

But they soon became the object of suspicion on the part of France and most of the European potentates, and were watched by numerous spies.

These sons, with their Napoleonic faces and their dreaded name, were too dangerous a memorial of the Empire to be left out of sight. As long as these princes of the house of Bonaparte were alive, there was no security for the Bourbons.

And yet they lived and thrived—exiles, it is true, and at present condemned to inactivity, but nevertheless young and energetic men, whom events might yet recall to their native country.

There was a time when their triumphant return to France did not seem at all unlikely, when it even appeared that they might soon be called upon to play a prominent part in history.

This was during the Revolution of 1830, when Europe was shaken to its very foundations. The people of France, who had been forced by the allies to receive back the Bourbons, rose as one man, pulled down the throne of that detested family, and freed themselves from the Jesuits who had found shelter behind it, and given Charles X. the fatal advice to recall the Constitution, abolish the liberty of the

press, and reintroduce the *auto-da-fés* and *dragonnades* of former times.

France, who in 1815 had been treated like a child, now considering herself of age, wished to break entirely with the past, and resolved to secure her future unaided and without foreign advice.

The Bourbon lilies had now faded never to revive. A few years of a fanatic and Jesuitical tyranny had deprived them of their last spark of vitality. France threw from her the flower that was dead, and substituted for it a new and vigorous plant.

The French throne had once more been broken to pieces, but remembering the horrors of the first revolution, the nation wished to avoid a republic. Standing in need of a king, France naturally chose the one who was nearest, who for several years had possessed her sympathies, and summoned the Duke of Orleans, the son of Philippe Egalité, to the throne.

Louis Philippe, the enthusiastic republican of 1790, who at that time had the three words, *liberté, egalité, fraternité,* and the motto, "Vive la Republique," tattooed on his arm, in order to prove the sincerity of the principles he professed, and who was afterwards an exile and wandered through Europe, at one time gaining his bread as a writing-master—Louis Philippe was now the chosen King of the French.

The people had dethroned the Bourbons, they had torn down the white flag from the roof of the

Tuileries, but they knew no better one to replace it than the tri-colour of the Empire.

Overshadowed by this banner, Louis Philippe ascended the throne. When the people beheld that flag proudly floating in the air, they were reminded of the glorious days of Imperial France, and, to testify the sympathies they still felt for Napoleon, they asked, not for his son the second Napoleon, but for the ashes of the great Emperor, and the restoration of his statue in the Place Vendôme.

Louis Philippe granted both wishes, and in doing so thought he had done ample justice to the old sympathies of France. He had adopted the colours of the Empire, and had promised to let Napoleon watch over Paris from the Vendôme column, and to restore his ashes to France—were not these sufficient proofs of his love for the Emperor?

There was little danger in conciliating the hearts of the French nation by these measures. On Napoleon the dead, honours might freely be bestowed, but it would not have been so safe to treat the living Napoleons in the same manner. Such a course might have endangered the newly-built throne, and brought the allies once more to the capital of France.

The hatred the legitimate potentates of Europe felt for the Napoleon family was not dead. It was for them a question of legitimate principle, never to suffer a Bonaparte on the throne of France.

It was for this reason that the great powers expressed through their ambassadors their willingness

to recognize the new king, on condition that he would renew the sentence of exile which the Bourbons had passed on the family of Napoleon.

Louis Philippe accepted this condition. The Napoleons, whose only crime it was to be brothers and relatives of the great Emperor before whom most of the sovereigns of Europe had once bowed, were again banished from their country and deprived of their natural rights.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE REVOLUTION IN ROME.

It was a heavy blow for the Napoleons to be thus once more exiled, a blow that destroyed their dearest hopes, and seemed fatal to their prospect of ever returning to France. They had rejoiced in the glorious July revolution, because they considered it a guarantee of freedom. Most sadly were they disappointed.

Now there was nothing else left them but to continue their previous life. They again turned to science and art, and sought consolation in earnest study.

Towards the end of October, 1830, Hortense as usual left Arenenberg to go with her son to Rome.

But this time she first visited Florence, where her eldest son, Napoleon Louis, had lately married one

of his cousins, the second daughter of King Joseph, and was living quietly with his young wife. The heart of the mother was full of apprehension and anxiety. She foresaw that the revolution in France would be a contagious fever, and that Italy before all could not escape infection. That country was diseased to its very heart, and it was but too probable that in the agony of its pain it would have recourse even to the desperate remedy of a revolution.

Hortense, aware of this, trembled for her sons, justly apprehending that they, who were banished and without a country, would lend their arms to those who were suffering like themselves. She dreaded their enthusiasm, their courage, and energy, for she well knew that if there should be a revolution in Italy it would gladly make use of the name of Napoleon.

She therefore besought her sons to stand aloof from all dangerous enterprises, and not to follow those who might try to lead them astray by the seductive word "liberty," which, in spite of the blood and tears it had already cost mankind, would never cease exercising an intoxicating influence upon such minds as theirs.

They promised to give heed to her warning, and thus reassured as to their immediate future, Hortense, with her youngest son, Louis Napoleon, left Florence and went to Rome.

The eternal city, which formerly had always borne an aristocratic and solemn character, assumed a sin-

gular appearance during this winter. The conversation in the drawing-rooms was no longer confined to art and poetry, or to the beauties of the Pantheon and St Peter's; amusement had ceased to be the sole occupation of the city; people now spoke about politics, the revolution in France, and were evidently awaiting the signal that was to announce its appearance in Italy.

Even the people of Rome, accustomed as they had been to idleness and inactivity, were beginning to stir, and the police heard many a strange and half-forgotten word as they passed the groups that gathered in the streets.

The Papal Government did not dare to arrest the republicans. It well knew that the people only wanted a pretext to rise in open rebellion, and it carefully avoided giving that pretext.

The object of the Roman authorities was to render a revolution impossible, by depriving the republican party of the means and materials necessary for a rising.

Now, the son of Hortense, young Louis Napoleon, was considered likely to give the movement a centre and a name, and it was therefore resolved to send him away.

His very name, the tri-coloured saddle-cloth of his horse as he rode through the streets of Rome, excited the people, in whose veins the fever of revolution was already at work. His banishment from Rome seemed to the Papal Government an absolute necessity.

The governor of Rome first addressed himself on the subject to the Prince's uncle, the Cardinal Fesch, asking him to recommend the Duchess de St Leu to remove her son for a few weeks from the capital.

But the Cardinal indignantly refused compliance with this wish, saying that his nephew had done nothing deserving banishment, and that he would never consent to advise his being sent away merely on account of his name and his horse's caparison.

The Commander-in-chief then resolved to adopt more energetic measures. He gave orders that the house of the Duchess should be surrounded with soldiers, and despatched a Papal officer, who, presenting himself before Hortense, told her that he had been ordered to see that her son should at once depart from Rome, and that he was to accompany him to the frontier of the Pope's territories.

The fear of an approaching popular rising had caused the Holy See to forget the respect due to misfortune, and the nephew of the great Napoleon was expelled like a criminal.

Hortense rejoiced that her son was sent away, for by leaving Rome he seemed less exposed to the danger of participation in a revolution whose proximity was no longer to be doubted. She therefore gladly consented to his going to Florence, where his father was living, and where she considered him out of the reach of the political contagion that threatened him in the Eternal City.

She therefore consented to his departure, which indeed she would have been unable to prevent, had it

been her wish to oppose it. A poor unprotected female, she had no one to speak for her, and not even the French ambassador would have afforded her assistance. There was no one to protest against the brutal and tyrannical treatment of the young prince except the ambassador of Russia.

The Czar alone, of all the potentates of Europe, felt himself strong enough not to dread the name of Napoleon, and was therefore mindful of the consideration that was owing to the family of a hero and an emperor.

The Emperor's Envoy therefore protested against the arbitrary conduct of the Papal Government, and he was the only one who did so.

What had long been apprehended at last took place. Italy rose as France had done, eager to throw off her yoke, longing to be free. It was in Modena that the storm burst. The Duke was compelled to a precipitate flight, and a provisional government, at whose head stood General Menotti, took his place.

The people of Rome at this moment were celebrating the accession of a new Pope to the chair of St Peter, Gregory XVI., who followed the eighth Pius in the vicarship of Christ, and apparently took no interest in anything beyond the festivities of the moment and the amusements of the carnival.

But under the smiling mask of popular rejoicing Revolution hid her stern features, though she had resolved not to show her face until Shrove Tuesday.

From time immemorial the Romans had been ac-

customed to throw sweets and flowers at each other on this day. On the present occasion stones and bullets were to take the place of these harmless missiles, the people having resolved to doff the fools-cap and appear in their real character, great and imposing, conscious of the rights for which they were about to contend.

The authorities, however, having received information regarding the intention of the conspirators to select the time of the great race on the Corso for a general up-rising, the festival was prohibited an hour before the usual time of its commencement.

The people, however, disregarded the prohibition, and the revolution, which the government had striven to suppress, began. The thunder of artillery and the rattling of musketry soon resounded through the streets of Rome. The insurgents everywhere offered the Papal troops an obstinate resistance.

Meanwhile the holy father trembled in the Vatican, and most of the Cardinals retreated step by step as the insurgents advanced. Gregory felt that his newly-acquired throne was already trembling beneath his feet, and that the Papal tiara was about to fall from his brow. He resolved therefore to invoke foreign aid, and implored Austria to uphold him.

Old Italy had invoked the assistance of Austria, but young Italy, full of hope and enthusiasm, eager for liberty, turned her eyes towards France, where the Liberals had just celebrated a glorious triumph. But France denied aid to her Italian sister, thereby

proving unfaithful to her own origin. The revolution was thus scarce seated on a new throne, had scarce clothed itself with the purple of royalty, ere it began to feel apprehensive of its own safety, became reactionary and denied itself.

Rome, like all the rest of Italy, wished to throw off the hateful yoke that had so long burdened her neck. The entire people became enthusiastic for this idea, and the streets in which it had hitherto been customary to see only sacred processions and swarms of monks and friars, now resounded with revolutionary songs. The Roman youth, carrying their heads proudly erect, displayed courage and confidence.

The strangers and visitors in Rome, alarmed at the sudden change that had come over the city, left it in great numbers, and returned to their respective countries. Hortense however resolved to remain. She knew that she had nothing to fear from the people; all her misfortunes and persecutions had originated with princes.

She had already made up her mind to remain in Rome, when she received letters from her sons, in which they besought her not to expose herself to the dangers of a revolution, but to leave the capital without delay; at the same time informing her that they had started simultaneously with the letter, and hoped to meet her on the road.

Hortense was almost beside herself with fear and apprehension when she read this letter. She who knew and coveted no other earthly blessing than her

sons, who incessantly prayed "that *they* might be happy, and that she might be allowed to die before *them*," felt that they were in imminent danger of being seized and carried away by the wild waves of revolution.

Had they not left Florence and their father? Were they not on their way to Rome, and therefore on the road to revolution? And could it be doubted for a single moment that this revolution would call them to its assistance, and desire to make use of their celebrated name?

But, perhaps, there was yet time to save them! Their mother's despair, her entreaties, might yet be able to keep them back from the abyss over which they were about to precipitate themselves in the ecstasy of enthusiasm. Hortense felt her courage and energy return with this thought.

On the very day when she received this alarming letter, she left Rome to hasten to her sons, whom she hoped she might yet be able to save. In each carriage that came rolling towards her as she travelled, she fancied that she beheld their faces. Alas! she was deceived!

Had they not written that they should come to meet her? Where were they?

Perhaps they had listened to the representations of their father, and were still in Florence awaiting her.

Thus tormented by fears and doubts, she at length reached that city. She drove up to the house where her son Louis Napoleon had of late resided. Her

feet trembled when she left the carriage, and she scarcely dared inquire after him. Nobody had seen him, he was not there!

But, perhaps, he was with his father? Hortense sent a messenger to her husband's hotel to obtain information. The messenger returned, alone and sorrowful. Her sons had left Florence.

They had both obeyed the voice of the revolution which summoned them. General Menotti, in the name of Italy, had asked them to lend their name and their arms to the cause of freedom and justice, and they had been unable or unwilling to resist the call.

A servant, who had been left behind by her younger son, gave the Duchess a letter from him, containing his farewell.

"Your love," the Prince wrote, "will know how to appreciate our motives. We have taken great duties upon us, and much responsibility, and have gone too far to return. The name we bear binds us to assist all those who are oppressed and call upon us for help. Please to tell my sister-in-law that it was I who persuaded her husband to accompany me, for Napoleon dislikes the idea of having hidden from her the slightest action of his life."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE DEATH OF PRINCE NAPOLEON.

What the Queen so much dreaded had come to pass. Youthful enthusiasm had overruled all other considerations. Hortense's two sons, the two nephews of Napoleon, were the leaders of a revolution.

They organized a system of defence from Foligno to Civita Castellana. The male youth of both country and town rapidly flocked to their banner, and willingly obeyed them as their generals. The insurrectionists, although but indifferently armed, and still more indifferently organized, were not deficient in courage. They were preparing to march upon Civita Castellana, in order to liberate the state prisoners who for eight years had been pining in the dungeons of that town.

Such were the news brought back by the messengers whom Hortense had sent to her sons with letters in which she besought them to return. It was too late; they neither could nor would remove their hand from the plough.

Their father was almost in despair about them. As he himself was unable to follow them, for he was confined to his arm-chair by illness and gout, he implored his wife to do all in her power to avert from them the dangers by which they were surrounded, for the revolution was already hopelessly lost, as no unprejudiced observer could fail to see.

But the Italian youth would not believe this, and continued to gather around the standard of insurrection, still hailing the revolution with shouts of joy, and allowing themselves to be carried away by the bewitching call of liberty, which rendered them incapable of cool reasoning.

Young men, whose parents tried to prevent them from joining the patriots, would often leave their houses secretly and in spite of all precautions.

One of the sons of the Princess of Canino, the wife of Lucien Bonaparte, had fled from his father's castle to join the army of the insurgents. He was caught, however, and taken back by force to the parental residence. The family were under great obligations to the Holy See, for the Pope had created the Duchies of Canino and Musignano in favour of Lucien Bonaparte and his eldest son; they therefore resolved to have recourse to the severest measures in order to prevent the young Prince fighting against the troops of the holy father.

The Duchess of Canino begged the Grand-Duke of Tuscany to lend her a cell in one of the state-prisons of his country. Her request was granted, and the refractory youth was imprisoned in Tuscany until the revolution was over.

Proposals were made to the Duchess of St Leu that she should follow a similar course, but in spite of the anxiety she felt, notwithstanding the obstinacy of the princes, which almost drove her to despair, she would not consent to their being subjected to the

humiliation of actual violence. If their own reason, if the entreaties of their mother, should prove unable to bring them back, force must not do it.

Meanwhile the whole family were zealously and incessantly endeavouring to withdraw the two Princes from the revolution, and thus prevent their names becoming once more the subject of suspicion to the legitimate princes of Europe.

Cardinal Fesch and King Jerôme besought them in the most affectionate letters to return, even using threats when they found that kindness was unavailing.

With the consent of the Prince's father they wrote to the provisional government at Bologna, informing General Armandi, the minister of war to the rebellious provinces, that the names of the Princes could only injure the cause of Italy, and that therefore he would do well to recall them. Friend and foe united to damp the zeal and counteract the efforts of the two Princes, and to convince them that they were only doing harm to the cause they wished to promote. The foreign powers might perhaps abstain from interfering in the affairs of Italy so long as the revolution in the Peninsula was of a local character, but they would certainly not fail to assume a hostile attitude if they saw the name of Napoleon at the head of a movement which might once more shake the very foundations of their thrones.

The two Princes at last yielded to the strength of

public opinion, resigned their commands, and divested themselves of the rank they had held in the insurgent army.

But although they were no longer allowed to serve the revolution with their name and their talents, they were resolved still to lend their arm to the cause of Italian liberty. Although they had resigned their commands, they remained with the army in the capacity of private soldiers and volunteers. When their father and uncles, not yet satisfied, insisted upon their returning to their family, the two Princes declared that, if pressed any further, they would go and serve the revolution in Poland.

Hortense had observed a certain sort of neutrality during these proceedings, for she felt they would effect nothing. She knew too thoroughly the character of her sons to admit of a doubt regarding their perseverance in a course they once had chosen; but she was also aware that the revolution had not the slightest chance of success, and that they would be lost, if taken with arms in their hands, or at the best compelled to leave the country.

Hortense therefore made active preparations to assist them in the hour of danger, arming herself with courage and energy, that she might thus be able to make head against the storm, whose approaching menaces already smote her ear.

Whilst all the rest of the family indulged in useless lamentations, her husband deploring the present unhappy state of his sons, Hortense was

composed and busy in making preparations for the danger she apprehended.

What she and all unbiassed friends of Italy had long apprehended, took place at last. An Austrian squadron made its appearance in the Adriatic, an Austrian army invaded the insurgent provinces of Italy, recaptured Modena, dispersed the revolutionary army, and deprived young Italy of her dearest hopes.

Now the hour of danger had arrived, and it was time to be up and doing. Hortense was full of courage and energy, she felt herself capable of any sacrifice if called upon to save her sons.

For a long time she had been considering where to go with them.

At first she had intended proceeding to Turkey, and settling in the neighbourhood of Smyrna, but the presence of the Austrian fleet in the Adriatic rendered this plan impracticable. Suddenly a genial idea flashed across her mind, and she saw the way of escape.

"I will carry them off in a manner that will be least anticipated," she said to herself: "I will lead them by a road where nobody will look after us; I will take them through France to England. Threats and humiliations may await us in Paris. What do I care? Honour, justice, and humanity cannot yet have altogether vanished from France; no serious injury will be done us. I must save my sons, the road through France is that of salvation, and I shall therefore choose it."

Hortense at once set to work in carrying out her

plan. She begged an Englishman who was living in Florence, and to whose family she had once rendered important services, to come and pay her a visit. When he arrived she asked him whether he would undertake to procure her a passport for an English lady and her two sons, who wished to pass through France to England.

The English gentleman, who knew what she meant, declared his willingness to assist her and the Princes.

On the following day he brought her the desired passport, and Hortense, who well knew that in order to keep a secret it is necessary not to have any confidants, now told her husband and friends that she intended to seek her sons and embark with them for Corfu.

The young Princes were still in Bologna. As within a few days that town must fall into the hands of the Austrians, all was lost if she could not succeed in reaching it before the enemy. Through an old and tried servant she sent a message to her sons, announcing her arrival, and as soon as night closed in, she set out herself, accompanied by only one of her ladies. She felt herself strong and courageous, for she had to save the only possession that was left her.

The carriage, drawn by swift horses, soon crossed the Roman frontier, and ere long she found herself in those districts where, the revolution being still victorious, the people continued to feel hope and confidence.

The inhabitants, wearing national cockades and

tricoloured ribbons, appeared happy and contented, nor would they believe that any immediate danger threatened them.

Everywhere festivities were being celebrated in honour of the revolution and their newly-acquired liberty, and those who spoke of approaching dangers and Austrian bayonets were laughed at and derided as cowards. Instead of making preparations for defence, the insurgents remained idle, and only thought of enjoying the fleeting hour.

The rebel army meanwhile was at Bologna. They had also occupied the towns of Terni and Soleta, which they had successfully defended against the Papal troops. Everybody was expecting a great, decisive battle, and but few doubted that the Italians would be victorious.

Hortense was far from sharing this universal confidence. At Foligno, where she stopped to await her sons, she spent miserable days of painful suspense. The slightest sound, the rattling of a carriage, would frighten her, for she was expecting every moment to see the princes arrive as fugitives, perhaps wounded or dying, to tell her that all was lost.

At last she could wait no longer in Foligno. She wished to be nearer the objects of her anxiety, to be able to appreciate the dangers that surrounded them, and if possible to share them. Hortense therefore left Foligno to proceed to Ancona.

When she arrived at the first relay house, she saw a gentleman leave his carriage, who, to her surprise, approached her. He was a stranger to her, and yet

she trembled at seeing him. A strange presentiment of evil seized her. The mother's heart felt already the blow that was to prostrate it.

The gentleman proved to be a messenger sent by her sons.

"Prince Napoleon is ill," he said, addressing the Duchess.

Hortense remembered she had been told that a nervous fever was spreading in the neighbourhood.

"He has the fever!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, Madame," the messenger replied, "he has the fever, and wishes to see you."

"Wishes to see me?—Then he must be very ill indeed! Coachman, drive as fast as the speed of the horses will permit. I must see my son."

And on they went with the utmost rapidity.

Hortense was half dead with fear. Pale and hardly breathing, but without a tear, she reclined in a carriage. From time to time she was heard to say in a low voice:

"No!—It is impossible!—I have suffered too much already—Heaven is just—God will not take my son from me, he will be spared."

And on they went; village after village flew past them, and they were fast approaching their journey's end. But the nearer their destination the more wretched those they met appeared. At each post-house where a change of horses became necessary, the peasantry collected around the Duchess's carriage and expressed their compassion for the unfortunate mother.

"Napoleon is dead; he is dead," she heard them say at more than one post-station.

Hortense heard these mournful words, but would not believe them. These people do not know what they are saying, rumour exaggerates. Her son is not dead, cannot be dead; Napoleon lives, yes, he lives!

And again the people murmured around the carriage:

"Napoleon is dead."

Hortense sat pale and motionless. Her senses were deserting her, her heart almost ceased to beat.

At last she reached Pesaro, and the carriage halted before the hotel where her sons, as she persisted in believing, were awaiting her.

Suddenly a young man, pale, and bathed in tears, rushed through the door-way up to the carriage. Hortense recognized Louis, and stretched out her arms to him. But when she looked up in his face, and beheld his pale cheek and swollen eyes, she knew all.

The people, after all, not her own heart, had been in the right—her Napoleon was dead!

And with a heart-rending cry she fainted away.

CHAPTER XL.

THE FLIGHT FROM ITALY.

Hortense, however, had no time now to weep over the loss of the son she had so dearly loved. Had not she to save the child who was left her, whom she loved no less dearly, and in whom all her maternal affection was now concentrated? She felt it was her duty to devote herself to the one she still possessed, who now stood by her side, pale and despairing, accusing fate of cruelty for not having allowed him to die with his brother.

Him she must rescue! This thought inspired her with courage, and endowed her with strength.

She was told that the authorities of Bologna had already made their submission to the Austrians, that the rebel army was defeated and scattered, and that hostile ships were on the coast, which at any moment might disembark troops near Sinigaglia, and thus render all escape impossible.

This news startled Hortense out of her inactive melancholy, and restored her usual energy.

She at once ordered her carriage to be got ready, and started openly for Ancona, to make people believe in her flight to Corfu.

Near Ancona, close to the sea-shore, her nephew possessed a villa, and thither she proceeded.

At times, when the tide was running high, the

foam of the Adriatic would plash the windows of the room she occupied, and she could plainly see the harbour and the crowd of fugitives assembled on the shore to escape on board the wretched craft collected in the port.

It was high time for these miserable beings to seek safety in flight, for the Austrians were fast approaching. When the army of invasion crossed the Roman frontier, their commander-in-chief proclaimed an amnesty, from which Prince Louis Napoleon, however, with General Zucchi and the Modenese, was excluded. All strangers who had taken part in the insurrection were to be treated with the utmost severity of martial law.

All the young men therefore who had come from Modena, Milan, and other parts of Italy, to assist the Romans in their insurrection, were now compelled to a precipitate flight, in order to escape the vengeful Austrians.

Louis Napoleon had to lose no time in effecting his escape, for it might become impossible at any moment. Hortense, who was ill, felt utterly exhausted, but the present was no time to think of herself. When she had saved her son, she might die—but not sooner.

She was quiet and composed as usual, while busily engaged in preparing her pretended and her real departure.

Her intention was to embark publicly with her son for Corfu, but secretly to escape through France to England. But the English passport which had been

given her mentioned two sons, and as Hortense had but one left, she was obliged to look out for some one who might fill the vacant place.

A fitting person was found in the young Marquis de Zappi, who, being even more guilty in the eyes of the Austrians than the majority of his companions, gladly accepted Hortense's offer, and promised not to interfere in any way with her plans, but to obey her as a son.

This being settled, the Duchess provided the two young men with everything that was necessary for their disguise as footmen, and ordered her carriage to be in readiness.

While the preparations for her journey to England were being carried out with the utmost secrecy, Hortense was openly making arrangements for a voyage to Corfu. She sent her passport to the authorities, begging them to attach the customary signature, and had her boxes packed.

Louis witnessed all these preparations with cold and mute indifference, going about pale and downcast; and although no complaint ever passed his lips, it soon became evident that he was ill. Hortense sent immediately for a physician, who, after having looked at the Prince, pronounced him to be suffering from a fever that might become dangerous if not carefully attended to.

Louis was therefore obliged to go to bed, and it became necessary that the departure should be postponed for a day. Hortense passed a sleepless,

melancholy night by the bedside of her feverish son.

At last the morning dawned on which she hoped to effect their escape. The friendly light of day was gradually dispersing the lingering shadows, when Hortense suddenly perceived, to her utter terror, that the face of the Prince was greatly swollen, and covered all over with red spots.

Louis Napoleon had the scarlet fever.

For a moment Hortense felt as if struck by a flash of lightning, but this feeling was only momentary. An energy which she had never known before now animated her frame, and sending for the physician, she confided in his humanity, and made him the sharer of her secret.

She had not been mistaken in him.

What was to be done must be done quickly, if not, all would be lost.

Hortense took everything into consideration, and weighed all chances with the greatest coolness and care. In the first place she sent a trustworthy servant to the magistrate, begging him to sign her son's passport, as he intended to embark that very day for Corfu. She then secured a berth in the only vessel that was bound for that island. Finally, she instructed the man to tell the inhabitants of the approaching departure of the Prince, and to spread the rumour that she herself had suddenly been taken ill, and was therefore unable to accompany him.

The report thus circulated was confirmed by the

physician, who told half Ancona of the dangerous illness of the Duchess de St Leu.

After this, Hortense ordered the bed in which her son was lying to be taken into a small room adjoining her chamber, and kneeling down by its side, she prayed God that he, the only child that was left to her, might be spared.

On the evening of that day the vessel destined for Corfu left the harbour of Ancona. Nobody doubted that Prince Napoleon was on board, and many sincerely pitied the Duchess, who, ill with anxiety and grief, had not been able to accompany her son.

Hortense meanwhile was sitting at the bedside of her feverish child.

Although she was herself ill, she felt no weakness. The great and continual excitement to which she was exposed at once kept up her strength and prompted her ingenuity. Two dangers were now threatening the Prince; an illness which through the slightest neglect might become fatal, and the Austrians, who had specially excluded him from their amnesty. Hortense protected him against both these dangers.

Two days had scarcely passed away, and the last two vessels laden with fugitives had just left the harbour of Ancona, when the vanguard of the enemy entered the town.

The commander of these troops, who at the same time was the quarter-master of the army that followed, selected the palace of the Prince of Canino, where Hortense was, as the residence of the commander-in-

chief and his staff. The Duchess, who had expected this, had already withdrawn, and confined herself to a few remote rooms, leaving the principal part of the house to the enemy. The quarter-master insisted however on the whole of the villa being given up for the use of the Austrians, and the steward's wife, to whom Hortense had confided her secret, found herself at last compelled to tell the officer that the person who occupied the rooms in question was no other than the Duchess of St Leu, alone, ill, and unhappy.

It fortunately happened that the Austrian captain, who acted as quarter-master to the army, was one of those officers who in 1815 had protected the Queen against the attacks of the infuriated mob which surrounded her carriage whilst passing through Dijon. He again proved a protector to her, and hastening to the commander-in-chief, Baron von Geppert, he acquainted him with the melancholy situation of the Duchess.

The Austrian General, firmly convinced that her son had gone to Corfu, readily consented to Hortense's remaining in possession of the rooms she occupied. After his arrival at the château he asked her permission to wait upon her; but she sent back word that she was still confined to her bed, and therefore unable to have the pleasure of seeing the General.

The Austrians now took possession of the whole château, with the exception of Hortense's rooms. The sitting-room of the commander-in-chief was separated by a single door from the chamber in which

Louis Napoleon was lying ill. The least noise might betray him. When he coughed they were obliged to cover him with blankets, and he was only allowed to speak in a whisper, for his Austrian neighbours would have been greatly surprised to hear a man's voice in the apartments of the suffering Duchess.

At last, after eight days of continual excitement and anxiety, the physician declared that the Prince might safely commence his journey. The Duchess therefore suddenly recovered. She begged the Baron von Geppert to call on her, as she wished to thank him for the kindness and sympathy he had shown her. When the General came she told him that she was ready to depart, and that it was her intention to go to Leghorn, where she would embark for Malta. In that island she was to meet her son, with whom she would then proceed to England.

As on her way to Leghorn she would be obliged to pass through the whole Austrian army, the Duchess begged the General to provide her with a passport signed by himself; expressing however a wish that her real rank and name might be kept secret.

The General, full of compassion for the unfortunate lady who was about to follow her exiled son, readily granted her request.

On the following morning, the first day of Easter, Hortense set out on her journey. Before starting she sent the commander-in-chief a short farewell letter, in which she informed him that she intended leaving the château at an early hour, as it was her wish to hear mass at Loretto.

All necessary preparations were made during the night. Louis Napoleon had to disguise himself as a footman, and a similar dress was sent to the young Marquis de Zappi, who had been hidden in the house of one of his friends. In this costume the two young men were to await the Duchess's carriage.

Day at last dawned, the hour of departure had arrived.

When the postboy's horn sounded, Hortense walked boldly through the rows of sleeping soldiers, who occupied an ante-room which had to be passed. Her son, wearing his livery, and laden with packages, followed her. Nobody but the sentinel saw them depart.

Day was just breaking when they started. In the first carriage sat Hortense with one of her ladies, Louis occupying the seat by the side of the driver; the second vehicle was occupied by the Duchess's maid and the Marquis de Zappi.

When the sun rose above the horizon, gloriously ushering in the solemn day of Easter, they were already far from Ancona. At Loretto Hortense went to the church, and kneeling down with her son, thanked God for their deliverance, beseeching Him at the same time for His further assistance.

There were still many dangers to encounter. The least neglect, an accident, might betray them, for they had still to pass through several places occupied by Austrian troops. This, however, was not the most dangerous part of their undertaking, as the passport signed by the commander-in-chief

was sure to be respected. But might they not be recognized by some friends? Might not some one, astonished at seeing the Prince, unconsciously betray him?

On their way to France they had to pass through the Grand-Duchy of Tuscany. It was here that they were most exposed to discovery, for Louis Napoleon was well known in this part of Italy, and might be recognized at any moment. Under these circumstances Hortense had recourse to night-travelling. She despatched a courier with orders always to keep in advance of the party and prepare the relays. Her anxiety was great, when on arriving at the post-house at Camoscia, there were no fresh horses to be seen. A delay of several hours took place—hours of great anxiety for Hortense—during which she sat in her carriage, terribly excited, and starting at the slightest noise.

Her son, who had left his seat on the box, sat down on a stone bench that stood in front of the wretched little inn before which they had halted. Greatly exhausted by the fatigues of the last weeks, and but partially recovered from his recent illness, he soon fell into a profound sleep, in spite of the cold night-breeze that fanned his cheek.

Thus they passed the remaining hours of the night, Hortense, the ex-Queen, sitting in her carriage, and Napoleon, the future Emperor of France, sleeping on a stone bench.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE PILGRIMAGE.

Heaven, taking compassion on her, heard the prayer of the unhappy mother, and allowed both her and her son to escape unhurt through all the dangers that surrounded them on Italian soil.

Near Antibes they crossed the frontier of France without being discovered or even suspected. They were now once more in their own country, the *belle* France for which they had been long sighing in vain. That country had banished them, and although a sentence of death threatened the Napoleons if they dared again to set foot on French soil, yet a feeling of delight thrilled through the hearts of both when they crossed the frontier. Neither Louis nor Hortense remembered the dangers of their situation; they only knew and felt that they were in their native country again. The air appeared to them purer and more balmy than elsewhere, while the sound of their mother-tongue echoed in their ears like music to which it was a delight to listen.

Their first night on French soil was passed at Cannes. The name of this town gave rise to many recollections. It was at Cannes that the Emperor Napoleon landed when he returned from Elba. He left this town with a little band, and arrived in Paris with an army. Everywhere the people received him

with enthusiasm, everywhere the troops, sent out against him, went over to his side. Charles de Labedoyère, the young and bold partisan of the Emperor, was the first to do so. He had been despatched from Grenoble with his regiment to check Napoleon's advance; but on coming in sight of the hero whom France so honoured, he placed himself in front of his men and shouted, "Vive l'Empereur." His example was followed by all.

Labedoyère afterwards paid dearly for his youthful enthusiasm. When the Bourbons returned for the second time he was shot, like Marshal Ney. They had both purchased the triumph of the hundred days at the price of their lives.

Hortense remembered these names, and the events connected with them, when, on arriving at one of the hotels of Cannes, she enjoyed her first hours of rest after a perilous and wearisome journey. Seated in an arm-chair she spoke to her son of these glorious days. What a difference between them and now! How great the contrast between their former greatness and their present humiliation! Had they not been forgotten, even by the nation which had once been proud of them? The French people had but lately risen in their might, and casting aside the captivity which had fettered them, had broken to pieces a detested throne, and driven from the country a dynasty that, till then, had looked upon France as a domain belonging to them.

All this had been accomplished. The nation, asserting their sacred right of self-government, had

chosen a king after their own wishes; but whom had they called to the throne? Was it the son of Napoleon?—the Duke of Reichstadt, who was pining away at Vienna, looking back with vain regret to the proud days of his illustrious father?—No. It was the Duke of Orleans to whose hand the sceptre of France was intrusted; and the first thing Louis Philippe did after being invested with the regal office was to renew the sentence of exile which the Bourbons had passed on the Napoleons, stigmatizing their return to France as a crime deserving of death.

"The nation have acted according to their own free will," Hortense said, with a sad smile, when she saw the pallor of her son's face, and the cloud of discontent that gathered on his brow. "The nation have acted according to their own free will, my son; honour the will of the nation. To honour Napoleon for the great services he rendered France, the nation raised him to the Imperial throne. The people who give have the right to take away again; the Bourbons, who look upon the country as their property, may consider it a domain stolen from them by the family of Orleans, but the Bonaparte family must always bear in mind that all their greatness originated with the people. They must never neglect listening to the wishes of the nation, to which they ought always to submit."

Louis Napoleon looked on the ground and sighed. He knew there was nothing left for him but submission, although the necessity was a painful one. He must steal into his own native country with a bor-

rowed name; in France, the land of his wishes and his dreams, he was not allowed to say that he was a Frenchman, and his only protection, his English passport, he owed to a nation that had chained his uncle, a second Prometheus, to a remote rock, and there left him to die. But he was forced to submit, if only for his mother's sake, who, deeply veiled, sat by his side as they passed from place to place.

Hortense's stories of by-gone days increased the attachment Louis had always felt for his native country. To be allowed to remain in France, and to serve her, was his dearest wish. He would gladly have entered the ranks of the army even as a private soldier.

One day he came into his mother's room with a letter in his hand which he had just written, begging her to read it. It was a petition addressed to Louis Philippe, in which he begged the King to end his exile and allow him to enter the army.

Hortense read the letter and shook her head. She was too proud to allow her son, the great Napoleon's nephew, to ask a favour of a man who, although professing liberal principles, had not dared to do justice to the family of the Emperor, but had banished them again from their country. In his desire to serve France, Louis Napoleon had forgotten this humiliation.

"My sons," Hortense says in her Memoirs, "although incessantly persecuted, even by those courts which owed everything to their uncle, always preserved their attachment to the country in which

they were born. Their eyes were constantly fixed upon France, they occupied themselves with the study of such institutions as they considered beneficial to her, and calculated to render her prosperous. They knew that the people were their only friends, and therefore resigned themselves to their will, thinking it their most sacred duty to serve them. It was for this reason that my son wrote to Louis Philippe, it was for this reason he so earnestly wished to be allowed to enter the French army."

Hortense advised the Prince not to send the letter. Seeing however that her counsel caused him much pain, she begged that he would at least postpone his petition until they had arrived in Paris.

Louis Napoleon yielded to his mother's wishes. Sad and lonely the two travellers continued their journey through a country where almost every town reminded them of their former greatness.

At Fontainebleau, Hortense showed her son the castle that had been witness to the proudest triumph and the most painful adversity of his uncle. Deeply veiled, she traversed, on Louis's arm, those rows of apartments and halls where once she had reigned as Queen. What a contrast again!

Although the officers and servants who went with them over the castle were the same whom Hortense had formerly known so well, she did not dare to make herself known. But she felt that she had not been altogether forgotten by them; she could see that plainly in the expression of the chamberlain's face when he opened the apartments she had once

inhabited, and could hear it in the tone of his voice as he mentioned her name.

Everything in the castle remained as it had been formerly. The furniture of the apartments the Imperial family had occupied after the treaty of Tilsit, in which they had given many a grand *fête*, and in which potentates and princes had been assembled to do homage to Napoleon and to solicit his alliance, was still the same. The rooms twice occupied by the Pope, voluntarily once, the second time compulsorily, and the little chamber in which the once powerful and dreaded Emperor had signed the deed of abdication, and laid down the crown which the French nation had placed on his head, were still unchanged. The chapel also was as it had been in Napoleon's time, when the baptism of his nephew, Louis Napoleon, was celebrated. Everything, in short, remained as of old, though the garden which had been laid out by Hortense and her mother had grown considerably. In its trees the wind sang a melancholy song of the vanity of earthly grandeur.

At last the two pilgrims arrived before the *barrière* of Paris. Hortense was at this moment nothing but a Frenchwoman, a Parisian, who forgot all her sorrows and cares in the pride of showing her son the beauties of the capital. She ordered the coachman to drive over the Boulevards as far as the Rue de la Paix, and stop there, in front of one of the principal hotels. It was the same road along which she had driven sixteen years ago, escorted by an Austrian officer. Then she had been obliged to leave

Paris in the night, having been sent away with her two little boys by the allies, who dreaded a defenceless woman and two helpless children. Sixteen years had passed away since that night; Hortense, returning by the same way she had left, was still an exile and without a home, and the son, who was sitting by her side, was not only banished from his country like herself, but menaced by an Austrian proscription besides.

Still she was in Paris, at home, again! She wept tears of joy on beholding once more all the favourite haunts of her youth, the streets and squares that were so familiar to her.

By a strange accident the carriage which conveyed Hortense, the ex-Queen of Holland, stopped before the "Hôtel de Hollande." The windows of the first floor, of which the Duchess took possession, afforded a fine view over the Boulevards and the Place Vendôme, with its column.

"Tell the column on the Place Vendôme that I am dying because I am not permitted to embrace it," the Duke of Reichstadt had once written in the album of a French nobleman, who, in spite of the numerous spies that surrounded the son of the Emperor, had succeeded in recounting to him the glorious history of his father and the Empire. The nephew of Napoleon was to enjoy the satisfaction which had been refused to his son.

Louis Napoleon might here safely go out. As no one in Paris knew him, no one could betray him. He went down to the Place Vendôme and viewed the

column of his uncle, which bore testimony to his greatness.

Hortense did not accompany her son on this errand. It would have been too painful to her to pass through the streets of Paris, hiding her face like a criminal. She wished to inform the French government of her presence in the capital, in order to avoid the humiliation of using a borrowed name.

Possessing the courage of truth and sincerity, she meant to tell the King that she had come to France, not in order to defy his sentence of banishment, or to intrigue against him and steal his crown, but to save her son, whom she was obliged to bring to France in order to reach England.

Revolution, which so strangely changes the fate of nations and of individuals, had introduced into the court of the new King many friends and officers of the Empire, who were well known to the Duchess de St Leu. But in order not to expose these persons to any suspicion, she applied to a gentleman unknown to her, who was too devoted an Orleanist to be suspected of Imperialist sentiments. Hortense, or rather her companion, Mademoiselle de Massuyer, wrote to Monsieur d'Houdetot, informing him that she had arrived with an English family, and had a message from the Duchess de St Leu for him.

Monsieur d'Houdetot, in obedience to her invitation, came to the hotel to see Mademoiselle de Massuyer. He was greatly astonished and deeply moved when

he found that the "English lady" was no other than the Duchess de St Leu herself, whom he believed to be on her way to Malta. Hortense's friends, who were equally ignorant of her bold stratagem, and who feared that the fatigue of the voyage would affect her feeble health, had already taken the necessary steps to obtain permission for her passing through France, instead of continuing the voyage by sea.

Hortense told Count d'Houdetot of her recent misfortunes, and expressed her wish to see the King, in order to speak to him concerning her son.

Monsieur d'Houdetot undertook to acquaint his Majesty with her wish, promising to call again on the next day, and tell her what success he had met with in his mission. He kept his word, and through him Hortense learned that the King had said, "he deplored the audacity of the Duchess in returning to France, and could not consent to an interview with her." The aide-de-camp added that, as the King had responsible ministers, he had been unable to conceal her presence from the head of his Cabinet, and that consequently the prime-minister, Casimir Périer, would call on her in the course of the day.

A few hours afterwards the celebrated minister of Louis Philippe arrived. He looked stern and displeased, as if he had come to pass judgment on the accused Duchess; but her frankness and womanly dignity seemed to disarm him, and he soon

adopted a more gentlemanly and polite demeanour.

"I know full well," Hortense said in the course of the conversation, "that I have violated the law in coming here. I am aware of the risk I ran in doing so. You have the right to arrest me, and it would be but just of you to do so."

Casimir Périer shook his head, and said:

"Just, no! legal, yes!"

CHAPTER XLII.

LOUIS PHILIPPE AND THE DUCHESS DE ST LEU.

THE conversation between Casimir Périer and the Duchess seems to have convinced the minister that the apprehensions of the King and his court had been groundless, and that the step-daughter of Napoleon had not come to France to intrigue against them, and to claim the throne for the Duke of Reichstadt or for Louis Napoleon. Her presence he felt satisfied was solely to be attributed to maternal love, which had made her choose the way through France as the one best suited to save her son.

This conviction removed all obstacles that stood in the way of an interview between the King and the Duchess, and Louis Philippe therefore sent word to say that he should be happy to see her. Perhaps the King remembered at that moment that it was

Hortense (who was then still Queen of Holland) who during the hundred days that witnessed Napoleon's restoration in 1815, had obtained from the Emperor a pension of 200,000 francs for his mother, the Duchess of Orleans, and who had rendered a similar service to his aunt, the Duchess of Orleans-Bourbon. In the joy of suddenly-regained prosperity, both these ladies had written the Queen the most affectionate and obliging letters.

We say, perhaps Louis Philippe remembered this, and wished to requite Hortense for what she had done to assist his family. However, he begged her to come and see him, and on the second day after her arrival in Paris she was admitted to the Tuileries, which, as the step-daughter of the Emperor, and afterwards as the wife of Napoleon's brother and Queen of Holland, she had once inhabited herself. Now she entered the palace as an exile and a fugitive, without a name and without a suite, in the hope of obtaining protection from those who had once been protected by her.

Louis Philippe received her with all that gracefulness and civility which were characteristic qualities of the "citizen king," and have always been distinguishing features of his house. But under the mask of hearty sympathy and honest friendship he concealed feelings of selfishness and but half-subdued suspicion. Without prelude he began speaking of what he knew the Duchess would wish most to converse on, her sentence of exile.

"I know," he said, "all the bitterness of banishment, and it is really not my fault that yours is not over yet."

He assured her that this exile of the Napoleon family was continually weighing on his mind, and even went so far as to excuse himself for it, saying, that, properly speaking, the banishment of the Imperial family was nothing but one of several paragraphs of the law calculated to prostrate the Conventionalists, and whose renewal the nation had demanded with impetuosity. Thus it seemed as if *he* had pronounced the sentence of exile, whilst in reality he had only renewed a law which already existed in the time of Napoleon's consulate.

"But," the King added in a tone of joyous conviction, "the day is close at hand when there will be no more exiles! I will have none during my reign."

Then, as if desirous of reminding the Duchess that there had been exiles at all times, under the Republic, as well as the Consulate and the Empire, he told her of his own banishment, of the humiliating and destitute position in which he had found himself, compelled at one time to take the situation of an assistant schoolmaster with a paltry salary.

The Duchess heard him with a smile, and replied that she knew the history of his exile, and considered it one that was highly creditable to him.

She then told the King with much frankness that her son had accompanied her on her journey to France, and was at the present moment in Paris.

"He has written a letter to your Majesty," she

added, "to beg you to allow him to enter the French army. He longs to serve his country."

"Let me have the letter," the King replied, "I will send Monsieur Périer to fetch it, and if circumstances allow it, I shall be happy to fulfil the wishes of your son. I wish you to understand that in every respect I shall consider it a pleasure to serve you. I am aware that you have a claim for considerable sums, and that the state has hitherto neglected to do you justice. Send your bill to me, Madame, write down everything France owes you, but send it to *me*. I know something about this sort of business, and will be your *chargé d'affaires* in future.

"The Duke of Rovigo," he continued, "has told me that the rest of the Imperial family are in equally bad circumstances. I should like to help them all, and will try to assist the Princess de Montfort (wife of King Jérôme) in particular."

Hortense eagerly listened to what the King said. As she looked in his open, good-natured face and saw his benevolent smile, she felt all her doubts and fears vanish. Not a shadow of suspicion was left in her heart. Fully believing in his sympathy and generosity, she thanked him with fervency for what he had promised to do in her behalf.

"O sire," she said, "all the Imperial family need assistance. You will have to make us forget many an injustice. France owes much to all of us, and it is a task worthy of you to help us to our rights."

This debt of France to the Bonapartes was an un-

deniable fact. The Emperor Napoleon had redeemed all the Crown diamonds, even the celebrated "Regent," which the Directory had pawned; he had restored and re-furnished all the Royal Châteaux, and paid all the expenses, not from the resources of the state, but from his civil list. He had also endowed the Crown lands with several hundred millions of francs, the fruits of his conquests. When he abdicated at Fontainebleau he fixed his own fate, and that of his family, through the renewal of the treaty of April 11, 1814, by which he gave up all his riches, all his private property, and surrendered the Crown diamonds to France on condition that a pension fixed by himself should be paid to him and his family. This treaty was signed by Talleyrand in the name of Louis XVIII., and guaranteed by all the Powers, but it was never carried out; on the contrary, all the property and estates of the Imperial family were confiscated, and they were not even paid the arrears of pension the Treasury owed, and which the Chamber of Deputies of 1814 recognized as valid, and inscribed as a State Debt.

The King once more declared his willingness to assist the Bonaparte family. Although he was but too anxious to save millions for himself, he could afford to be generous at the cost of the state.

The Duchess believed him, confided in his honesty and friendship, and was delighted with his affability. He even presented her to his wife. The Queen, as well as Madame Adelaide, seemed delighted with the Duchess's visit. Once only in the course

of the conversation did Madame Adelaide forget that she was a friend of Hortense. She asked her how long she meant to remain in Paris, and when the Duchess replied that she would probably prolong her stay for three days, she exclaimed, visibly alarmed:

"So long? Three whole days? Are you aware that there are a great many English families here who have seen your son in Italy and may recognize him?"

Fate itself seemed resolved to postpone the Duchess's departure. When she returned home from her visit to the Tuileries, she found that her son had been once more attacked by the fever, and that he had been obliged to go to bed immediately, the physician who had been called in declaring that he was suffering from an inflammation of the throat.

Hortense had once more to tremble for the life of the last treasure she possessed, the only one she had been able to secure from the wreck of her fortunes.

Again she sat by his bed-side, watching over him day and night, and tending him with motherly care. To see her son spared was her only wish, her incessant prayer, in comparison with which everything else was trifling and uninteresting. She never left the sick-room, except when she was obliged (as was daily the case) to receive Casimir Périer, who came regularly to inquire, in the name of the King, after Napoleon's health, and to urge her to draw up a valuation of what the country owed her, his master, he told her, being anxious to meet all her demands.

But Hortense had only one wish now, the recovery of her child. She expressed, however, to the minister her desire to be allowed to visit in the course of the summer one of the watering-places in the Pyrenees, in order to restore her shaken health. The minister promised to obtain the King's consent.

"In this way the government will gradually grow accustomed to your presence," Périer said to the Duchess. "As regards yourself personally there will be but little difficulty in reopening the doors of your country, but with your son it is a different thing. His name will always prove an obstacle to him. If he really wished to enter the army he would, before all, be required to change his name. We are obliged to consult the wishes of the foreign powers. France is divided into so many factions that a Napoleon might easily lead to serious complications. Therefore your son must change his name if—"

But here the Duchess interrupted him. Her eye glistened, her cheek was coloured with the flash of anger.

"What, my son divest himself of that glorious name of which France is justly proud? Hide and deny it as if it were a disgrace to bear it?"

And forgetting in her excitement the suffering state of the invalid, she hastened to his bed to inform him in hurried words of the proposal the minister had made them.

The Prince, with a violent effort, raised himself in the bed.

"Change my name?" he exclaimed, "who dares to suggest such a thing? Let us forget our wishes, mother, let us return into obscurity. You were right, the time of the Napoleons has passed, or—has not yet arrived!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

DEPARTURE FROM PARIS.

The excitement of this scene increased Napoleon's illness, and caused the fever to return with renewed violence. Hortense was constantly with him, performing all the duties of a careful nurse. With her own hands she laid the ice on his head, and aided in putting on the leeches the physician had prescribed.

The continual anxiety and excitement in which Hortense had now lived for many weeks at last exhausted her strength. She felt that she too would soon be ill if her son did not speedily recover, and therefore followed the physician's advice, who told her that daily exercise alone could prevent her succumbing to the fatigue with which she overtasked her frail constitution.

Every night, in the dusk of evening, she left the sick-room, and, in a plain black dress, with her face deeply veiled, walked through the streets of Paris, accompanied only by the Marquis de Zappi. Nobody knew her, no one saluted her, none could

guess that the dark figure passing silently along had been once a Queen, accustomed to traverse these thoroughfares in a glittering carriage hailed by the acclamations of the crowd.

While thus wandering through the streets, Hortense would freely indulge in reminiscences of former days. She showed the Marquis the palace she had once inhabited, and which was still dear to her as the birth-place of her sons. Smilingly she looked up to the brightly shining windows of her former dwelling, in whose rooms some wealthy banker or ennobled grocer was perhaps at that very hour giving a *fête*. Raising her hand she pointed up to the windows, and said :

" I wished to see this house again, that I might reproach myself for having felt unhappy whilst inhabiting it. I then complained of my lot even in the midst of splendour and affluence—oh, I did not dream then of the greatness of the misfortune that was to overtake me one day."

Turning away, she walked on to look at the houses of several old friends who she knew had remained faithful to her. Although she did not dare to call on them, she experienced great satisfaction in the thought of being near them.

Having thus consoled herself, she continued her walk through the streets of Paris, unknown by the people, perhaps even forgotten by them ! But no ! not forgotten ! Is not that her portrait in the shop-window by the side of that of the Emperor ?

She stopped, and in deep emotion gazed at the

pictures. A noisy, tumultuous crowd thronged around her as usual, not one of whom took any notice of that veiled female standing at the shop-window with a tear in her eye.

"So they do remember us after all!" she whispered. "Those who possess crowns are not to be envied; a person is far happier in the consciousness of a people's love, and the love for us is not quite extinct yet."

The seeming indifference with which France had heard the sentence of exile passed on the Napoleons had deeply wounded Hortense's heart. She had often wished that she might meet with one more token of affection on the part of the French nation, believing that she would then return into exile with a lighter heart. Her wish had been granted, for these portraits proved that the Emperor's family were not quite forgotten.

Hortense entered the shop to buy the pictures. The man that kept it told her that there was a great demand for them, on hearing which she was hardly able to repress her tears.

She took the portraits and returned home with them, to give her son these tokens of French affection.

Whilst the heart of the Duchess was thus divided between the recollections of the past and the cares and sorrows of the present—she had already been for twelve days in the capital, silent and unknown—the newspapers were extolling her heroism in successfully rescuing her son, with whom she

was stated to have already embarked at Malta, for England.

Even in the ministerial council of the King they occupied themselves with this voyage, of which they considered it necessary to inform Louis Philippe. Marshal Sebastiani told him that he knew from good authority that the Duchess and her son had arrived at Corfu. He spoke with much warmth of the fatiguing voyage Hortense had before her, and asked whether she would not be allowed to travel through France.

The King looked almost displeased, and replied dryly,—

"Let her continue her voyage."

Casimir Périer bent his head over the paper before him, and a close observer might have perceived a smile on his face. Monsieur Barthe, one of the ministers, improved the occasion by a display of his eloquence in proving the existence of a law by which the Duchess's presence in France was prohibited.

Hortense's presence in Paris, however secret it was kept, began nevertheless to become more and more displeasing to the King and his prime minister. The latter had already informed her once through Monsieur d'Houdetot that her departure was becoming absolutely necessary; and nothing but the actual sight of the unhappy Prince, who was just being bled again, could have induced him to consent to a prolongation of their stay.

But now the eve of a great and dangerous day, the 5th of May, the death-day of Napoleon, was at hand. Great excitement prevailed amongst the inhabitants of Paris, and it was with feelings of apprehension that the new government beheld the dawn of so momentous an anniversary.

Louis Philippe's fears did not appear to be altogether ungrounded. From the earliest dawn of day thousands gathered round the column in the Place Vendôme, silently approaching the monument to deposit flowers and garlands at its foot or to hang them on the eagles with which it is decorated.

Hortense witnessed this scene from the windows of her apartment, and wept tears of joy and emotion. Suddenly a hasty knock was heard at the door, and immediately afterwards Monsieur d'Houdetot, pale and confused, entered the room.

"Duchess," he said hurriedly, "you must depart at once, not another hour will be allowed, I am ordered to tell you, unless it is absolutely necessary on account of your son's illness."

Hortense heard him quietly, almost pitying a king who had cause to be afraid of a helpless woman and a youth confined to his bed. How great, she thought, must his terror be to make him forget all the laws of hospitality and decorum! What had she done to justify this fear? Had she appealed to the nation in her distress, and demanded protection and assistance for the nephew of the Emperor? On the contrary, she had hidden herself from the people, in her anxiety

not to create any agitation in France, and had confided the secret of her presence to the King himself, that he might help and protect her.

But the government distrusted her in spite of this high-minded honesty, and her presence, although still a secret in Paris, terrified those who were in power. Hortense could not help pitying them. Not a word of complaint or regret passed her lips. At once sending for the physician, she told him that affairs of importance necessitated her speedy departure for London, and asked whether the voyage would be dangerous to her son. The physician replied that although he should have liked his patient to enjoy a few more days of seclusion and repose, he thought that, if proper care were taken, the Prince might leave Paris on the following day.

"I shall leave to-morrow then; please to inform the King of it," Hortense said to d'Houdetot; and whilst that gentleman hastened away to bear his master this welcome piece of news, the Duchess began making preparations for her voyage, on which she set out early on the following morning.

After four days' travelling they reached Calais. The ship that was to take them over to England was ready to sail. Hortense, an exile once more, again forced to leave her native country, was anew condemned to a life amongst strangers. Because the nation could not forget the Emperor, the French King dreaded the Imperial family. The Bourbons, openly hostile, had attacked and persecuted them. Louis Philippe, who owed his crown to the people, feeling

that it would be wise to flatter them a little, had pretended to share their sympathies. He declared that he felt the greatest admiration and love for the Emperor, although he did not hesitate to sanction the banishment of the members of his family. Although he had ordered the Emperor's monument in the Place Vendôme to be honoured and decorated, he at the same time drove the daughter and the nephew of Napoleon from the capital, and turned them out of the country.

Hortense obeyed and went away, but she felt by the wound in her heart that it was her native country she left, the country where there was many a friend she might never see again, and where the ashes of her mother and her son reposed. She had to leave behind her once more the land of her dearest recollections. Her tears told her how much she was still attached to it, convincing her that, although banished from its soil, she had never ceased loving the country which she considered still as her home.

CHAPTER XLIV.

A PILGRIMAGE TO FRANCE.

The sojourn of the Duchess in England, which country, after a stormy passage, she reached in safety with her son, was for both a succession of triumphs. All the high aristocracy of London were

anxious to receive her with tokens of love and esteem; everybody seemed desirous to show the step-daughter of Napoleon that the English regretted their unnecessary severity towards the Emperor.

The Duchess of Bedford, Lord and Lady Holland, and Lady Grey, in particular, showed great friendship and hospitality to Hortense, and were anxious to introduce her to the most distinguished families of the country. But she accepted none of the numerous invitations she received. As it was her desire to shun publicity, she carefully avoided mixing in society. She was afraid lest the French Government should again suspect her of ambitious plans, and for that reason place obstacles in the way of her return to her estate on the Lake of Constance, to the quiet and lovely Arenenberg, where she had spent many a year of peaceful retirement. It soon became evident that her apprehensions were not unfounded.

The arrival of Hortense and Louis Napoleon created fear and uneasiness amongst many political parties, who all tried to discover the motives that had brought the Duchess to London, for they were convinced that she was secretly occupying herself with some scheme that might interfere with and be hostile to their own plans. The Duchess of Berry, who was then living at Bath, at once hastened to town to watch Hortense. This bold and enterprising lady was already making preparations for an expedition to France, where by means of an insurrection she hoped to regain the throne her family had lost, and it was therefore but natural that she should sus-

pect Hortense of harbouring similar plans. Her impression was that the Duchess de St Leu wished to dethrone Louis Philippe and place her son or the Duke of Reichstadt at the head of the nation.

There were even persons who warned Prince Leopold of Coburg, to whom the great European powers had just offered the crown of Belgium, to be on his guard, as the Duchess had come to England only in order to possess herself, by a *coup de main*, of that kingdom, which she was desirous of giving to her son. The noble-minded Prince scorned to listen to these absurd insinuations. He knew the Duchess from the days of her former greatness, and at once hastened to renew his acquaintance. He showed the poor exiled lady the same friendship and respect he had once felt for the Queen of Holland. Recurring in the course of their conversation to the glorious days of the past, they talked about the hopes and prospects of his own future. Prince Leopold had been deeply afflicted by the death of his beloved wife, Charlotte of England, and he wished to seek consolation in earnestly endeavouring to render his new subjects as happy as possible, and was on the point of starting for his kingdom.

When, after a long and hearty conversation, he took leave of the Duchess, he said with a smile,—

"Au revoir!—But you really must promise me not to deprive me of my little Belgium when you happen to pass through it."

Whilst the French government as well as the Bourbons, who were exiled like the Napoleons, sus-

pected the Duchess de St Leu of bold, ambitious plans, the Imperialists and Republicans were endeavouring to induce her to side actively with them. In France as well as in England the opinion prevailed that the newly-founded kingdom of Louis Philippe was not possessed of any vitality, because it wanted the support of the nation. The Legitimists, who wished to see a Bourbon on the French throne, fancied that the people were longing for their lawful king, Henry V.; the partisans of the Empire, proclaiming that the new government was on the eve of its fall, asserted that every Frenchman would be anxious to hail Napoleon's son as his sovereign. The Republicans, however, beginning to distrust the people and the army, and feeling that free institutions would be best promoted by a Napoleon, sent agents and emissaries to the Duke of Reichstadt as well as to Louis Napoleon.

The Duke of Reichstadt, to whom the emissaries proposed that he should come to France and appeal to the people, replied:

"I cannot come to France as an adventurer; let the nation call me, and I shall find means to escape from here."

Louis answered the proposals that were made him differently.

"I will belong to France, no matter how. I have proved this by asking permission to serve in her army."

He added, however, that he disliked the idea of using violent measures to realize the wishes

of a nation whose decrees would ever be sacred to him.

Hortense anxiously watched the proceedings of the Imperialists and Republicans to win her son to their side, for she dreaded his being tempted into dangerous enterprises. All she wished was to be allowed again to live in peaceful retirement, feeling as she did exhausted and disappointed after the few steps which she had lately ventured in the public world.

Hortense longed to return to Arenenberg and the mountains of Switzerland. Her desire was to withdraw her son as soon as possible from the theatre of political intrigue. If Louis Philippe would only allow her to pass through France, she might reach the Swiss Canton of Thurgau in safety, where her little estate was situated. There, as she had become naturalized, the Emperor's daughter might live in peace under the wing of the Republic.

Accordingly she addressed herself in a letter to Monsieur d'Houdetot, begging him to procure her a passport from his government, which might enable her to travel through France under some feigned name.

After much hesitation the passport was promised, on condition, however, that she should not commence her journey until after the first anniversary of Louis Philippe's ascension to the throne. She declared her willingness to accept this condition, and received on the 1st of August a passport, which allowed "Ma-

dame d'Arenenberg and her son to pass through France on their way to Switzerland."

At first it was the intention of the Duchess to pass through Paris, in spite of all the political excitement that prevailed in the capital, and on purpose to prove by this step how little she was mixed up with the machinations of the discontented; but when she told Louis Napoleon of her intention, he exclaimed:

"If we go to Paris and see the people shot down in the streets, I shall be unable to restrain myself from siding with them."

Hortense tenderly embraced her son, and replied:

"We will not go to Paris, but we will visit the shrines of our greatness, and pray before them."

On the 7th of August the Duchess de St Leu and her son left England and passed over to Boulogne.

Boulogne was the first of the shrines Hortense intended visiting. It was the town where she had once been an actress in one of the grandest military demonstrations described in history; she had been with the Emperor when he lived in the camp of Boulogne, to prepare himself for a glorious and decisive campaign. A high column shows the place on which the camp stood. This monument, which was erected in the time of Napoleon, was afterwards made to bear the name of Louis XVIII.

Accompanied by the Prince, the Duchess de St Leu visited this column, from the top of which they enjoyed a wide and extensive prospect of *la belle* France, which had once done homage to their family. Hortense showed her son the situation of the differ-

ent encampments, which had been chosen in the course of the manœuvres; the spot where the Emperor's tent had stood, and the place where his throne had been erected, when for the first time he distributed amongst his army the crosses of the Legion of Honour.

Louis Napoleon listened with intense interest and glowing cheeks to all that his mother told him. Hortense, sunk in recollections of the past, had not been aware of the presence of some other visitors, a gentleman and a lady, who had been listening to her narrative, and who now approached her, tendering their thanks for the interesting sketch she had drawn of one of the most memorable episodes in the history of France. They were a newly-married couple, who, having just come from Paris, were able to tell them much about the agitated state of the capital and the hostility of the various political parties.

As if desirous of giving something in return for Hortense's interesting narrative, they told the Duchess and her son a *bon mot* which was just then circulating in the *salons* of Paris. Some clever politician had suggested that the best thing for France would be her transformation into a Republic with three Consuls at its head; the Duke of Reichstadt, the Duke of Orleans, and the Duke of Bordeaux. "But," it was objected, "the first Consul might, perhaps, be tempted to make himself Emperor, and do away with his two colleagues."

Hortense had sufficient courage to reply to this anecdote with a smile; but she lost no time in re-

turning to town with her son, for the couple might have recognized her and told her the *bon mot* on purpose.

Mother and son returned silently to their hotel, which was situated close by the sea, affording a beautiful view over the surging waves of the Channel.

They went out and sat on the balcony. It was a delightful evening, and the sun, surrounded by purple clouds, was just shedding its last rays over the dark blue surface of the ocean. As the air was clear, the column, near Boulogne, was plainly visible.

Hortense had been sitting in silence for some time, now contemplating the sea, now looking at the monument. At last turning to her son, she said with a smile:

"Come, let us indulge in the remembrance of bygone days. In the face of that proud monument I should like to unroll before your eyes a picture of the past. Do you wish to see it?"

Louis Napoleon nodded affirmatively, without turning his gaze from the Imperial column.

Hortense went into her room, and soon returned with a manuscript bound in red velvet. During their peaceful days at Arenenberg the Prince had often seen his mother writing in this book; but she had always refused to give him any information concerning her Memoirs. Now she volunteered to read to him part of them. She wished to show him, as a counterpart to the sad and hopeless present, a bright and glorious picture of the past, and if possible to

reconcile him to his position by a representation of the instability and vanity of human life. Might not that which had so rapidly passed away return? Might not the heir of Napoleon's great name again behold such days as those of the Empire?

Hortense sat down by the side of her son, and opening the manuscript began reading as follows:

CHAPTER XLV.

FRAGMENT FROM THE MEMOIRS OF QUEEN HORTENSE.

"The Emperor had returned from Italy. The imposing solemnity of the distribution of the crosses of the Legion of Honour had taken place before his departure, and I had been an eye-witness of it. Now the Emperor went to Boulogne to superintend a second distribution of the decoration. He had appointed my husband commander-in-chief of the army of reserve, and sent him a messenger to solicit his presence, and that of myself and son, in the camp of Boulogne. My husband was unwilling to leave St Amand, whose waters he was using at the time, but he wished me to proceed to Boulogne and spend a week in the company of the Emperor.

"Napoleon inhabited a small villa in the neighbourhood of the town, called Pont de Brigue. His sister Caroline and Murat lived in another house close

by. I took up my quarters with them, and we went daily to dine with the Emperor. For two years past our troops had been concentrated in sight of England, and everybody expected an attack. The camp of Boulogne was situated on the sea-shore, and almost resembled a town. Each hut had a little garden, in which flowers and vegetables grew, and the soldiers used to keep birds and other pets. In the centre of the camp, on an eminence, stood the tent of the Emperor, and not far from it that of Marshal Berthier. All our vessels of war were drawn up in one line, and only waited for the signal to be ready to sail. In the distance could be seen the coast of England, and her beautiful ships were cruising to and fro, forming a formidable barrier of defence. In beholding them it was impossible not to feel that the enemy, against whom the French stood arrayed, was a powerful one, and this feeling created apprehension and doubt. The sea, whose blue expanse lay spread out so peaceably before us, might soon be turned into a battle-field where the *élite* of the two greatest nations would contend with each other. Our troops, who recognized no obstacle, had become impatient at their prolonged inactivity; full of energy and courage, they considered the coast on the opposite side of the Channel already their own. This confidence of our soldiers, based on their well-known courage, was conducive to a confident belief in success at times, but when I looked at the forest of masts on the other side of the Channel, I could not help feeling afraid of the issue. Yet there seemed to be nothing wanting for

the departure of the expedition, save a favourable breeze.

"Of all homages a woman can receive, there are none so flattering and acceptable as those which bear a military and chivalrous character; it is impossible to resist them. Nothing could be imagined grander and more imposing than the demonstrations and festivities whose queen I was whilst in the camp at Boulogne; and they produced a lasting impression on me.

"The Emperor gave me his master of the horse, General Defrance, as a guide. As soon as I showed myself in the camp, the troops near whom I passed stood to their arms and saluted me. I had begged forgiveness for a few soldiers who had laid themselves open to punishment, and was everywhere received with the greatest enthusiasm. A splendidly-mounted staff surrounded my carriage, and martial music sounded in my honour wherever I went. On the occasion of one of these rounds through the camp I, for the first time, saw the urn in which the heart of the valiant Latour d'Auvergne was kept. The Emperor, to honour the memory of this dauntless soldier, had ordered his heart to be enshrined in an urn, which was fastened to the bandoleer of the oldest grenadier of the regiment in which Latour had served. Whenever the roll of the regiment was called, the name of Auvergne was read amongst the rest, and the bearer of his heart used to answer, 'Died on the field of honour.' *

* Latour d'Auvergne, a descendant of the celebrated Turenne, was

"One day the staff gave me a *déjeuner* at the camp of Ambleteuse. I wished to proceed thither by water, and the Admiral, in spite of the contrary wind, insisted on taking me there on board his yacht. I saw several English men-of-war, and we passed so near them that they might easily have captured us. I also visited the Dutch squadron, commanded by Admiral Versuell. The Hollanders received me with a hurra! They probably little thought at the time that I should once be their Queen.

"At one time the Emperor began the war on a small scale. The English, who felt uneasy at the sight of the powerful concentration of troops round Boulogne, approached nearer and nearer to the French coast, and even fired upon us. The Emperor was in front of his columns when they returned the firing, and thus suddenly found himself between two fires. We had followed Napoleon, and were of course obliged to remain with him. My son did not show the least sign of fear, which seemed to please his uncle very much. The Emperor's staff trembled for his life; the ramrod of an awkward musketeer might here become as dangerous as a bullet.

"I often felt surprised at the contrast our troops offered when drawn up against the enemy and their appearance in barracks. The same men who would

renowned throughout the whole army, on account of his heroic courage, and the bravery he had displayed on repeated occasions; as he persistently declined all the honours and promotion offered, Napoleon appointed him the first grenadier of the army. He fell at the battle of Neuburg, where the Viceroy of Italy erected a monument to him.

glow with impatience to rush to a murderous fight, seemed like children in their huts and little gardens. A bird or a flower would then amuse them.

"Upon the occasion of a *fête* which Marshal Davoust gave me in his tent, some grenadiers entered with the bashfulness of young girls, to sing a few songs they had lately studied. They looked quite embarrassed and timid whilst singing some verses that over-flowed with threats against England, and whose chorus, if I remember right, was :

> 'To cross the straits is not, methinks,
> So very difficult a task !'

"From the Emperor's apartments we often looked at the soldiers of the Imperial Guard, who used to assemble on the meadow in front of head-quarters. One of them would frequently take a fiddle and instruct his comrades in dancing whilst he was playing. Beginners studied the 'jetés and 'assemblés' with the greatest attention, while others, more advanced in the graceful art of Terpsichore, performed quadrilles. We would stand behind the drawn blinds and watch them. The Emperor frequently caught us at it, and shared our amusement in beholding the innocent pleasures of his guards.

"Was the invasion of England really contemplated ? Or was it the Emperor's wish simply to mislead his enemies by concentrating so powerful an army at a point where he never intended to use them ? I am unable to answer this question. I confine myself to the relation of what I actually saw.

"One day the wife of Marshal Ney invited me to a *fête* she had arranged at Montreuil, where her husband commanded. In the morning we went to see the manœuvres of the troops, in the evening there was a grand ball. Suddenly intelligence reached us that the Emperor had just embarked.

"A great number of officers who had been invited to the party rushed back to Boulogne, and I did the same. I still had General Defrance by my side, but he was trembling with impatience to be with the Emperor. I myself felt greatly excited at the idea of being present at so momentous an event. I believed I should be able to witness the battle from the tower near the Emperor's tent, and I already fancied I could see our fleet advancing to engage the enemy.

"At last we arrived. I immediately inquired after the Emperor, and was told that he had really ordered the embarkation of his troops, but that he had just returned to his villa.

"I did not see him again until dinner, when he asked Prince Joseph, who was then a colonel, whether he had believed in this sham embarkation, and what effect it had produced amongst the soldiers?

"Joseph replied that, like all others, he had really believed in the departure of the expedition, and that many of the soldiers had sold their watches in expectation of the rich English spoil. The Emperor frequently inquired whether the telegraph did not announce the approach of the French squadron. Napoleon's aide-de-camp, Lauriston, was on board of

one of the ships, and the Emperor seemed only waiting for his arrival and a favourable wind to start with the expedition.

"The eight days my husband had allowed me were over, and I took leave of the Emperor. I passed through Calais and Dunkirk, and everywhere I met with troops. It was not without regret that I left the Imperial army, which I believed would within a few days be exposed to the greatest dangers.

"I was daily expecting to hear of the Emperor's passage to England, when suddenly his army passed through St Amand on their way to Germany. They proceeded by forced marches towards the Rhine. Austria had unexpectedly declared war. We at once hastened to Paris, once more to see the Emperor before his departure."

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE PILGRIM.

On the following day Hortense continued her pilgrimage through the land of her youth and her recollections.

It was a sad journey, this passage through France, and yet one that was not without its charms. The very fact of her travelling on her native soil was a great consolation. For sixteen years she had been

an exile, living in a country whose language she did not understand, and whose inhabitants therefore always remained strangers to her. She was delighted again to understand what people were talking about in the streets and in the fields; she was happy to be once more amongst her own countrymen, with whom she never neglected an opportunity of conversing or of listening to their talk.

Whenever they had resolved upon staying a day or two at a certain town or village, she would leave her hotel and walk with her son through the streets. At one moment she would enter a shop and speak with the people who came to supply their little wants; at another she would stop a child in the street, caress it, and inquire after its name. She also conversed frequently with the country people who were working in their fields.

On such occasions she would ask them what they thought of the harvest, and inquire into the nature of their soil. Hortense felt delighted with the sound common sense that generally manifested itself in their answers, and took a maternal pride in showing her son this large and prosperous family, the French nation, to which themselves belonged. At Chantilly, Hortense showed Louis the castle of the Prince of Condé. The forests in its neighbourhood had once belonged to the Duchess, or rather had been part of the property that had been set aside by the Emperor after the annexation of Holland to France for her second son, Louis Napoleon. Hortense had never before been in this part of France, and could

therefore visit the castle without fear of being recognized.

She asked the man who showed them over the place, who had formerly been the proprietor of the forests of Chantilly ?

" The Emperor's step-daughter, Queen Hortense," was his reply ; " people about here kept talking a long time of her. It was rumoured that she went about the country in disguise. Lately I have heard nothing more about her ; I wonder what has become of her ! "

" Perhaps the poor Queen is dead," Hortense replied, with so sad a smile that her son could hardly repress a tear.

From Chantilly the two exiles proceeded to Ermenonville and Morfontaine. Hortense wished to show her son all the places where, in the days of her greatness, she had been with the Emperor and her mother.

Most of these towns looked now as melancholy as herself. What magnificence had once been displayed in Ermenonville when the Emperor visited its lord during the hunting season ! In the walks of the park that had once been illuminated by thousands of coloured lamps the grass was growing untended, and a half-decayed boat conveyed them to the little poplar-covered island that was consecrated to the memory of Jean Jacques Rousseau, on whose monument the Duchess and her son inscribed their names.

Morfontaine looked even more melancholy. In 1815 it had been sacked by the allies, and the castle

had not yet been repaired. Here the treaty of peace with the United States had been signed in the time of the Consulate, and in the castle Hortense had been present at a great banquet given by Joseph Bonaparte, who was then the proprietor of Morfontaine, to his Imperial brother.

St Denis had a peculiar interest for the Duchess, for there was situated the school for the daughters of officers, whose patroness she had been. She did not dare to show herself, for she well knew that she could not have been forgotten, and her presence was not to be known.

She visited the church, however, and descended with her son into the tombs. Louis XVIII. alone lay in these vaults, restored by the Emperor that they might receive his own dynasty. He who had rebuilt these tombs rested under a willow tree in a lonely remote isle, whilst the man who had driven him from France occupied his place in these funereal vaults.

In viewing the church Hortense could not help remembering the day when she visited it for the first time with the Emperor, who had come to inspect the works. She had been ill and suffering then, and said what she felt when she told her mother that Queen Hortense would be the first to find a resting-place in the newly-built vaults. Her expectation had not been realized. After many a year she found herself once more in the same church; and was now almost the only one of her family remaining. There was another tomb which Hortense wished to visit; that of

her mother, Josephine, who lay buried in the church of Ruelle.

A crowd of melancholy recollections rushed upon her mind whilst kneeling on this grave. Of all those whom Josephine had once loved none were left but Hortense and her son, and these two were exiles who came stealthily to weep by her tomb! But the Empress's resting-place was adorned with flowers and garlands, a proof that there were persons near it who still remembered and loved her. Hortense felt greatly consoled at beholding these tokens of affection.

From Ruelle she proceeded to Malmaison. This château especially she wished to show her son. It was at Malmaison the Emperor had finally left France; there Hortense had enjoyed the melancholy privilege of comforting him when he had fallen from the height of his greatness, and of standing by his side when most of his friends and followers had deserted him. But, alas! the Duchess was not to have the satisfaction of showing her son the memorable château that had once been her property. Its present proprietor had given orders not to admit any one who could not show a ticket signed by himself, and of course Hortense did not possess one.

She found herself turned away from the very gates that had formerly been proud to receive her as their mistress.

With tears in her eyes, and leaning on the arm of her son, she returned to the inn.

They both sat down on a stone seat in front of the house, and looked at the château. At this moment

Hortense felt that she had nothing to visit in her native country but graves, that she stood alone, isolated with her recollections of the past.

"It is but natural," she whispered, "that those who are allowed to remain at home should forget those who are banished. But the exile himself ceases to live inwardly; for him there is no present and no future, the past is his all! In France everything has moved on, all is changed, but I have remained the same with my feelings and my sympathies. Oh, how sad it is to be forgotten, how. . . ."

Suddenly they heard the notes of a pianoforte close by them. The seat which Hortense and her son had chosen was under the windows of the inn-keeper's drawing-room, and these windows were open. The voices of those in the room could be plainly heard.

"Sing us a song, my child," a female voice was heard to say.

"What song shall I sing?" a young girl asked.

"Well, sing that beautiful song which your brother has just brought you from Paris; I mean the song of Delphine Gay, which has been set to music by Monsieur de Beauplan."

"Oh, you mean the song about Queen Hortense, who is represented as a pilgrim coming to Paris? You are right, mother, it is a beautiful song, and I will sing it to you."

The young girl began singing with a clear voice the lines written by Delphine Gay, afterwards Madame de Girardin.

Soldats, gardiens du sol Français,
Vous qui veillez sur la colline,
De vos remparts livrez l'accès,
Laissez passer la pèlerine.

Les accents de sa douce voix
Que nos échos ont retenues,
Et ce luth qui chanta Dunois
Vous annoncent sa venue.
(Refrain.) Soldats, gardiens du sol Français, etc.

Sans peine on la reconnaitra
A sa pieuse réverie,
Aux larmes qu'elle répandra
Aux noms de France et de patrie.
Soldats, gardiens du sol Français, etc.

Son front, couvert d'un voile blanc,
N'a rien gardé de la couronne;
On ne devine son haut rang
Qu'aux nobles présents qu'elle donne.
Soldats, gardiens du sol Français, etc.

Elle ne vient pas sur ces bords
Réclamer un riche partage,
Des souvenirs sont ses trésors
Et la gloire est son heritage.
Soldats, gardiens du sol Français, etc.

Elle voudrait de quelques fleurs
Parer la tombe maternelle,
Car elle est jalouse des pleurs
Que d'autres y versent pour elle.

Soldats, gardiens du sol Français,
Vous qui veillez sur la colline,
De vos remparts livrez l'accès
Laissez passer la pèlerine.

CHAPTER XLVII.

CONCLUSION.

At last Hortense's melancholy pilgrimage was finished. She returned to Arenenberg amidst the mountains of Switzerland, and lived as formerly in her villa with the beautiful view over the Lake of Constance, with its islands and its picturesque shores.

Honour to the Canton of Thurgau, which offered the dethroned Queen an asylum, when most of the sovereigns of Europe, her own relatives not excepted, persecuted her or drove her from their territories.

In Arenenberg Hortense rested after all the vicissitudes and disappointments of an eventful life. Her heart was crushed by the terrible blow it had received in the death of a dearly beloved son; her mind was saddened and bowed by the harshness and cruelty of the world, and of beings who in the cowardly fears of their egotism had become untrue to the most sacred and imperishable of all religions, the religion of recollections.

How many who had formerly vowed love and gratitude to her had abandoned her! How many to whom she had been a benefactress had deserted her in the hour of danger!

In the magnanimity and mildness of her heart she forgave them all, and, instead of feeling hatred, pitied them. She had finished with the world!

During the last years of her retirement in Arenenberg, Hortense wrote the sad and affecting narrative of her travels through Italy, France, and England, which she had undertaken in the heroism of her maternal love to save her son. The unpretending and yet talented work is a monument to her memory, that ranks higher than columns of brass or stone. The latter speak to the eye only; but her book speaks to the heart. It was written after a life of sorrow and disappointment, written by an exile, but it breathes a spirit that is worthy of a noble-minded and patriotic woman.

Its conclusion runs thus:

"The renewal of the sentence of banishment clearly proves that we are still suspected. We have not found a single champion to raise his voice for us, and this increases the bitterness of exile; but I wish from the bottom of my heart that those who have forgotten us may be happy, and that France may be blessed with peace and prosperity.

"The nation, I know, will always cherish our memory, for they can never forget the glorious days of the Empire, its celebrity, its grandeur, and the constant kindnesses bestowed upon France. I feel I have a right to speak thus; this reconciles me to my banishment, and is a consolation I will take with me into the grave."

Hortense lived a few more peaceful, silent years, far from all she loved, far too from the son who was her only blessing, her only hope; little suspecting what a brilliant future Destiny had in reserve for

him, and that the Louis Napoleon who had been expelled from France by the Bourbons when a child, by the Orleanists when a young man, would hereafter be enthroned in Paris as an Emperor, while the Bourbons and the Orleanists pined away in a foreign land, in compulsory exile!

In 1837, Hortense, the flower of the Bonapartes, expired.

Wearied of the life of misfortune and banishment in which she pined away, she bowed her head, and went home to her great dead, to Napoleon and Josephine.

THE END.

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